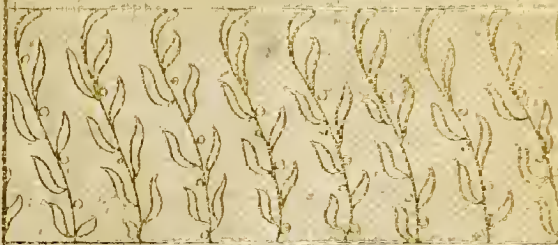


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BOOK OF
THE MVSES



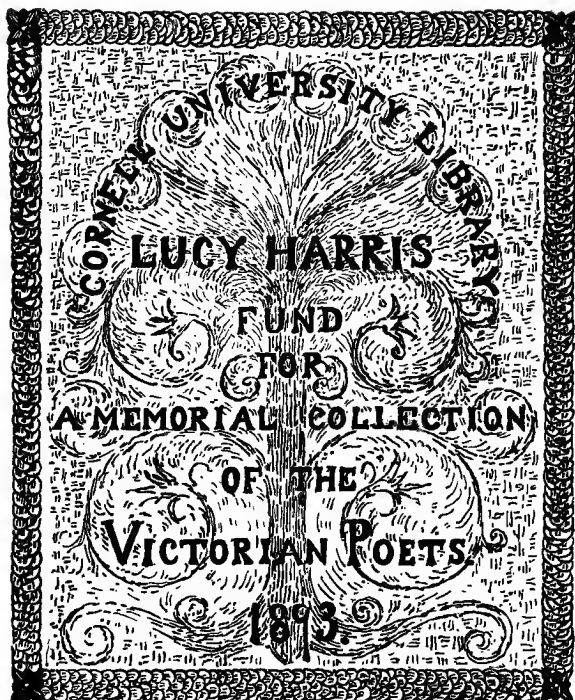
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THE WHITE BOOK
OF THE MUSES

Printed February 1895

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THE ☼ WHITE ☼ BOOK
OF ☼ THE ☼ MUSES
BY ☼ G. F. REYNOLDS
ANDERSON ☼ ☼ ☼ ☼



GEORGE P. JOHNSTON
EDINBURGH: MDCCCXCV

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OXFORD

TO WALTER PATER

*PALE visions of the taper spires,
Like warning fingers pointed, rise
Around me, lo, and there it lies,
Oxford, a pool of fading fires !*

*A dim metropolis of dreams,
Repopulate with beams and gleams !*

*City of Sunset—thou that bidst
My spirit kneel as bent in prayer—
To me thou art the more famed fair
For one who murmurs in thy midst,*

*A poet whom the Muses chose
As minister, as Mage of Prose.*

*And now I come so close to him,
Thou temple of the Golden Tomes,
That towers, blest roofs, and gourded domes
In pageantries of purple swim—*

*Then tired I wake, to read again
Of Marius and the minds of men.*

7th July 1894.

WALTER PATER

DEATH, sprinkle ashes on thy face,
Hide, hide thyself away from men,
For he is dead whose voice again
Shall never charm the ear of space—

Pater is dead whose genial breath
Gave loveliness to life—to death.

Who can forget when Flavian died ?
Not I, for life at that was tinged
With quiet colour, earth was fringed
With sadder seasons glorified.

Is he too dead who let me live ?
Hope flees, and Faith is fugitive.

His soul was like an oriel,
And through it came the sunset glow
Colouring all the cool air so,
While twilight deepened like a spell ;

And stained in glories warm and faint,
Knelt Beauty like a blazoned saint.

31st July 1894.

OF THE MUSES

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THE WHITE BOOK

OF THE MUSES

HOMER

DARKNESS ! the darkness of the infant earth
Whose new-born lips with primary life suspire—
Darkness, the frame to string with light, the lyre
Unstrung as yet in one great Poet's dearth !
When, lo, eternal Homer burst to birth,
And strung the darkness with resounding fire,
And sprung to light with all the dawn's desire,
And wrung the heavens as with the morning's
mirth !

Homer, the sun who brought the earth-child joy,
The morning-star who from Heaven's quivering
height

Shed lustre o'er the walls and halls of Troy—
Morn's self who, moving with Achilles' might,
Astounded darkness with the gift of light,
And stood god-father to the earth, a boy.

THE ILIAD

INEVITABLY as Fate the large lines move,
The full-mouthed verses that implore, reprove :
Grecian Achilles, Hector, and, afar,
Helen, a flame, a flake, a flower, a star.

THE ODYSSEY

OLD Ocean marshalls these great measures so,
These great Neptunian cadences that flow :
Ulysses, brutish Cyclops, and, above,
Penelope, a shell, a bird, a dove.

THE WHOLE

MORNING, noon, and night, that fill the sky,
Birth, and life, and death, that make us die ;
Time, eternity, and, o'er the whole,
Homer, the heart, the head, the brain, the soul.

MÆONIDES

IMMORTAL old Mæonides,

Through years that have thy name for sign
I see thee by the Chian seas.

The thymy civil-spoken breeze

For thee makes music sibylline,
Immortal old Mæonides.

Spring like a palmer treads the leas,

And, while the tawny sun doth shine,
I see thee by the Chian seas.

The Muses hail thee on their knees—

The golden sisterhood, the nine—
Immortal old Mæonides.

And as they bend, between the trees
Catching a glimpse of glimmering brine,
I see thee by the Chian seas.

Let Summer burn, or Winter freeze,
Wrapt up in olden dreams of thine,
Immortal old Mæonides,
I see thee by the Chian seas.

SAPPHO

WHAT cometh through the silver haze,
Whirled by the gusty wheels of time ?
Only a leaf of Sappho's bays.

The year hath lipped its leafy lays,
And 'mid the main's memorial rhyme
What cometh through the silver haze ?—

A memory of immortal days,
A relic of the years that climb :
Only a leaf of Sappho's bays.

The music of far-fading Mays
Laughs in each star's antiphonal chime ;
What cometh through the silver haze ?

'Tis not the stars themselves that praise

Earth's pre-eternal pantomime :—

Only a leaf of Sappho's bays.

From faded roses Love can raise

Sweet memories of their crimson prime :

What cometh through the silver haze ?—

Only a leaf of Sappho's bays.

QUATRAIN

WHILE now thou sittest 'mid that silver choir

Whose minds empearl the ivory of speech,

We find the shattered pieces of thy lyre

Cast up by Time like wreckage on the
beach.

ÆSCHYLUS

HE stands alone ; all Nature gives him hail :

The golden-handed lightning swift unlocks

Heaven's sulphurous heart if Æschylus but
knocks

In deafening tones that bid the stars turn pale.

He stands alone, exulting in the gale ;

Hell shivers at his feet ; creation rocks

Beneath his hand, while thunderously he mocks

The thunder's self who dare not countervail.

He stands alone ; the sea upholds his name,

The sea whose iron lips alone can frame

Due praise to him to whom the winds gave breath,

And, upward gazing as we sunward climb,

We go to give the King a part of Time,

Of Life and Love, and Heaven and Hell and
Death.

THREE POETS

*GOD made a man the image of himself,
A man in whom the nights and days were one,
Who, rising, clomb the mountain's craggiest shelf,
And laid his hand upon the sacred sun ;
Who took the moon from the close cave of night,
And brushed the stars away from him like chaff ;
Whose sorrow shook the highest heavenly height,
While earth grew giddy at his lightest laugh.
The sea obeyed him, fawning like a hound,
Licking his feet with multitudinous lips,
And, when he struck his staff into the ground,
The firmament was shaken with eclipse :
God framed and fashioned three men even thus :
Their names were Shakespeare, Dante, Æschylus.*

ARISTOPHANES

As mighty as the mountains
The personality which holds us here ;
As limpid as the fountains
The flow of fancies crystalline and clear,
Divinely from the earth derivative,
And destined e'er to live.

The mountains shall not crumble,
Nor yet shall he who holds us as of yore ;
The fountains make and mumble
The rhymes they mumbled and they made
before ;
And earth-like, he shall circle, as he sings,
About the sun of things.

THEOCRITUS

A PASTORAL landscape amber-lit and sunny :

There once you dwelt. Its lovely peace
equipped

Your quiet muse with sweetness never sipped
By merchant bees who barter not for money,
But whose green mart is earth—whose gold is honey.

Afar the soft-haired ocean, azure-lipped,
Spake in the shore's great ear, and bright
prows dipped

Cruising with far white sails for spotted tunny.

Yea, there you dwelt, and there to-day dwell I,

There where the moon, with eyes that shun the
light,

Beneath the blue-stained awning of the sky

Waits for the cool companionship of night,

And, while I weep to see pale Daphnis die,

Your tears make all Time's gloomy dial bright.

CATULLUS

NOT the gods themselves could lull us
 Into slumber half so sweet,
Half so dreamful, as Catullus
 Sheds in music round our feet—
Sheds, until our ears are brimming
 Over with the sound of love—
Sheds, until our eyes are swimming,
 Dimming at the sight above
 Rimming all the night with love,
 Limning passion's dove with light.

Not the gods themselves could cull us
 Blooms as cool and blest as these
Beauty's woodman, best Catullus,
 Gathers 'neath the passionate trees—

Gathers where the spring's romances
Set the woods aglow with love,
Where the heart which love entrances
Dances to the gods above,
Trances all the night with love,
Glances like a dove towards light.

OMAR KHAYYAM

*You gazed on life, and did not find her fair
Who sprinkled ashes on her face and hair ;
Thine were the veins whose blood ran ruby wine ;
We drink : it is the vintage of despair.*

DANTE

DANTE, thy veiled form amid the night
Is as the bulk of that Olympian Jove
Whose bolts struck bold Briareus when he strove,
Binding him helpless on the Ætnean height.
How oft the moon had lapsed and sunk from sight,
In watery robes of western silver wove,
Ere thou, with lightnings clinging as they clove,
Startledst the dawn's dark ancestry with light.

How oft when sunrise flowered to flame again,
Thy verse rang clear across the hollowing wold
Far-travelled not of mortals, not of men,
But by such gods as thee whose fingers hold
Puissance to wield and bid the imperial pen
Write Dante's name in charactery of gold.

THE THREE CROWNS

I. THE IRON CROWN

(Dante on Earth)

FLORENCE, is this my due, is this my meed,
This iron crown of exile and of wrong?
Is this the superscription of my song,
This pain 'neath which my spirit seems to bleed?
Mayhap the hour will come when thou shalt heed
Each bloody tear mine eyes have shed so long;
Mayhap my love will win thine own, twice strong,
When these bright years that break to-day recede.

Though, Florence, thou hast been the house wherein
My soul hath wasted sadly through the years,
Yet, Florence, yet I would forget my fears—
Ev'n now my name is spoken 'mid the din
Of downcry and of death—might I but win
Thy smile—my mother's—to transform my tears.

II. THE CROWN OF FIRE

(Dante in Hell)

MY heart is hard and frozen in the gloom—
Frozen and pulseless in the night enorme
Made dire with harrowing portents of the storm ;
My face is dark with glyphic signs of doom ;
Grim shadow-shapes project themselves and loom
About me, while around my veiled form
The darkness tightens ; though the air was warm,
Keen ice-blasts freeze. Hell, do thou yield me
room.

My breast falls open, and the hand of Death
Lies heavy on my heart but not my soul ;
The clouds close round in fiery ranks that roll,
While over all a loud voice trumpeteth
'Mid foul upheaval of contagious breath,
'Dying, thou livest to attain thy goal.'

III. THE CROWN OF GOLD

(Dante in Heaven)

WHITE cavalcades of stars are round me wheeled,
Each sphere pavilioned in beatitude,
And one high hope that held me up and stood
Beside me ever is achieved and sealed.

The future's horoscope I see revealed
In vivid star-signs, while each darkling mood,
Whose bitter secret was my spirit's food,
Turns golden to the touch : my wound is healed.

The iron crown upon my haughty head
Is now of gold ; upon my brow the deep,
The sad lines sorrow sowed for time to reap
Are now no more ; and lo, the tears I shed
Upon my Mother's brow give glory now
To her whose lips were withered else and dead.

PETRARCH

SINGER of love, grown lovely in its light—

Petrarca—let me greet thee as I would

Some grave arch-priest of sorrow and solitude

With God's sweet congregation in his sight. }

Yea, and because thy spirit was so white—

A lily christened by the dew—my mood

Puts on the garb of reverent brotherhood ;

I weep with thee, for sorrow's self seems bright.

One woman by her ivory beauty built

Thy life to absolute music, like the spring,

And sweet it was though set to rhythm sad ;

And other lives are filled with sound, are gilt

With tonal colour of thy sorrowing,

While thou art gone, in robes of singing clad.

CHAUCER

CHAUCER, who read'st the changeless runes of life,

Thine is no flowery largess of the May,

Dancing and shining in a rosy strife,

But one of all the year, where each fair day

Shines, dances, as a jewel set in clay—

One that imprints a pure perpetual glory

Upon the might-enamelled front of story.

Yet one hard season lends the wintry ray

Of hapless love, and oft and oft I pay

The silver toll of tears to that sweet wife

Of Fame, divine Emilia, and would lay,

'Mid fever of violin and vaunt of fife,

All life before thee as a scroll unfolden

For thee to trace with letters honey-golden.

VILLON

NAY, François Villon, nay, our burglar-bard,
We shun thee not for all thy life's mischances ;
We still gaze on thy face with gladsome glances
Though all the music of thy life be marred.
What if thy shame's abasement do retard
The pureness of thy song ! As Time advances,
Thy name moves all men's lips, whose love
enhances
Thy high renown with rare unique regard.

Our England hath its Villon-soul of song,
Whose words were wild and passionately strong—
Marlowe, that shoe for stately Shakespeare's feet.
And, Villon, where sitt'st thou ? Supreme, alone,
None to dispute thy strange and dizzy throne
O'er which love's sunlight sheds its dayspell
sweet.

QUATRAIN

THY hands are red as lips are red with wine ;
Dark shadows of thine age are o'er thee cast ;
And like an angel—fallen, yet divine—
Thou loomest in the chasm of the past.

THE TESTAMENT

VILLON, I seem to see thee strange and sad
With wild companions round—an evil throng
Having as much true virtuousness as had
Villon.

The noise dies down, and clear and sweet and
strong
Some hope of Heaven comes nigh as if it bade
Leave this vain rout and triumph over wrong.

Alas ! Hell welcomed thee, and thou wert glad
To see it open to thyself and song :
Thy song is sweet, 'twas thou alone wert bad,
Villon.

SPENSER

THE Faerie Queene sits on a throne immenser
Than Time or Fate her subjects' whole demesne
Who hail, 'mid crowds of vassals growing denser,
The Faerie Queene.

Love loved her once with love than death in-
tenser ;
Death challenged Love with hate than love more
keen ;
But Death was conquered by the fierier fencer.

So that shamed duellist, Death, avoids calm
Spenser
Who, down the transept of the past serene,
Goes gravely, swinging as a golden censer
'The Faerie Queene.'

ETERNAL FAME

THE elves and fairies of eternal fame

With brown leaves furnished by autumnal fingers
Cover and case your name from blush or blame

Or blemish cast by Time, who lurks and lingers,
Loiters and lurks, around your virgin fame.

The elves and fairies have a fairy chief—

Chaste Love, who leads them through your
bowers of pleasure,

Your pleasant bowers—relief from suns of grief

At noon of misery's most burning measure—
Your bowers whereof the bower of joy is chief.

The elves and fairies love you long and well,

Have loved you and shall love you as eternal—
Love and have loved the spell you speak, and tell—

Nay, bid, command—cold Time with favours
vernal

To deck your tomb and love you long and well.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

SMALL need to praise the linnet, laud the lark !

'Twould seem that May came only for their
sake :

Their praise is in the pride the green months take
In painting every wood and meadow and park.

The nightingale that dazzles all the dark

Finds her best praise in hedge or briery brake.

Why to the rose a single compliment make—
The rose which half the seasons fondly mark !

Then why praise thee—song's rainbow fugitive ?

Thou, like the linnet, like the lark, the rose

Or any other flower which buds and blows,

Find'st thy praise in the world where all men live :

Not man but every season comes to give

Greeting to thee whence song by nature flows.

TO THE REV. DR. A. B. GROSART

*THOU, like a diver in the seas of Time,
Bring'st, from the deeps where piled up centuries lie
Like wrecks unseen of any earthly eye,
So many gems as fair as in their prime,
Such light-appareled pearls of lustrous rhyme,
Speech fails to speak the thanks our hearts imply,
Our voices falter and our feelings die :
We can but watch thee at thy toil sublime.*

*Yet what need'st thou of any mundane praise
From us inferiors of those souls of old ?
Time takes thy jewels in his hand and weighs
Their worth that widens in his worthy hold,
Then laying love's arm upon thy shoulder, pays
Their price in glory, far outglittering gold.*

MARLOWE

HARP singing in the lawless hands of birth,

Thy sounds with those of heavenlier pitch were
mixed ;

Thy strings proclaimed deep keys of sorrow or
mirth ;

On wild mad themes thy melodies were fixt ;
But towards the end, when thy great music grew
More largely beautiful and grandly calm,
The tenor strains of angel harpists drew

The various sounds to one seraphic psalm.
God would have smiled in spite of globèd tears :
The heaven-won music mounted up victorious ;
Timewould have laughed in spite of clogging years :

The full-scored future lay divinely glorious ;
Swift flash and clash of knives, a stab, a cry,
And then the voice of Death that thunders, 'Die.'

QUATRAIN

THE steel that wounded wayward Marlowe's brain
Can ne'er be cleansèd of its crimson stain.
It now becomes a type of Time defined,
Bright with the overflow of Marlowe's mind.

TAMBURLAINE

TERROR and thunder of a thousand drums ;
The clank of bucklers and the clash of spears ;
'Tis Tamburlaine, 'tis Tamburlaine who comes,
Washing kingdoms from the face of War as
tears.

Wonder and thunder of iambic drums ;
Sound of Olympian armies taking breath ;
'Tis Marlowe—mighty as with God—who comes,
To conquer kingdoms and dismantle Death.

SHAKESPEARE

THE years fall back, unheeded, un beholden ;
Life's eyes toward the Future tend and turn ;
Old faiths grow chill ; new passions pulse and
burn ;
Jeers take the place of joy, and tears wax olden.
Yet are the sun's broad leaves of light unfolden,
To sunward still the yellow sunflowers yearn,
And still, though pain be glad, or joy be stern,
The world is Shakespeare's, and her smiles grow
golden.

To what shall we compare him ? to the sun
With web o' the ruddy skeins of morning spun ;
To ocean, or the mountains, or the thunder ;
To aught of earth, filling man's fate with wonder ;
Or only to the flowers, which, blowing as one,
Have all the nerves of Nature quivering under.

'ALL STARS ARE ANGELS; BUT THE SUN IS GOD'

GOD said, Let there be light : and there was light.

And Shakespeare, coming with' the leaves and
flowers,

Bids gloom and mist and every cloud that lowers
Shine through with hues sun-golden, starry-bright.

His word is law : the sabled bulk of Night

Falls ; Time, far pinnacled on days and hours,
Topples, and, communing with sphery Powers,
Earth hails the planets as they wheel their flight.

Man may not see the face of God, but He

Beholds the face of all men. It is so ;

And more than that God is not man may know,
Yet God takes in all lives ; all things that be

'Neath shadow of His o'erarching gaze must go :
And as with God—thou Shakespeare— 'tis with
thee !

THE SONNETS

THE breath of old-time roses breathes afresh
In the divine deep odorousness of summer,
When fields of clover, dew-inlaid and nesh,
Make glad each thievish furry-belted comer ;
So here the honied things of love are writ
Again, yet sweeter than the old-time story,
And like those robbers of the rose I sit
And dip myself in Shakespeare's antique glory.
These sonnet-petals are not carven of dream,
But hewn of his own adamant heart ;
For like a fadeless perfect flower they seem,
Vermilioned with the vital blood of art,
With lustre from the soul itself new taken—
The leaves of love by man's own magic shaken.

THOMAS CAMPION

CHAINLESS Love alone may champion

Rights as clear, as dear, as thine—

Love who in the cause of Beauty,

Ev'n as in the cause of Campion,

Fights and findeth War's grim duty

Gracious and divine.

Yet, if Love forsook thee, Campion

(Never, never ! Love now saith),

Yet, if Love forgot his duty,

Thou wouldst never want a champion

While the world remembered Beauty,

Life forgot not Death.

JOHN DONNE

FOR songs of thine our fields of song are sweeter ;
Men recognise,
Through tangling brushwoods of umbrageous
metre,
Lines not the highest could have limned com-
pleter
However wise.

There was about thy bulk what would belittle
The burliest name ;
'Fore thee the brazen years were thin and
brittle ;
Life broke, and Death received thy dust for
quittal,
And thou hadst fame.

Thou wert an old-time Browning in embryo,
More rugged than he,
Yet like him and before him sprung the scion
Of Nature—she who like the mother-lion
Whelped him and thee.

JOHN WEBSTER

*A VOICE thus shook the unfathomable gloom :
' Webster am I, whose ear, against the earth,
Caught deafening secrets from the lips of Doom,
Nor knew if they were mixed with tears or
mirth.'*

BEN JONSON

BELOVED even in the face of blame,

Chief Rabbi chosen of the tribe of Ben !

With hand too large to guide a human pen !

Changing for ever and yet ere the same !

O rare Ben Jonson, but to say thy name

Brings up dear dreams of those divine days when,

Through the strong large voices of promoted
men,

The spacious utterance of the gods oft came !

It was not thine to work such rounded wonder

As now betrays his tools who was the Prince.

Thou gavest us but thyself to so convince

Man of thine honesty unriven asunder—

Thou 'fore whose glance majestic, quailing under,

The myriad eyes of monster passions wince.

RICHARD BARNFIELD

CHANCE linked thy name with Shakespeare's—
happy chance :

We might have missed the sweetest, freshest
breath

That leads the spring and lets the daisies dance,
Starring with smiles the wintry front of Death.

MADRIGAL

APRIL cannot come our way,
Neither May be merry,
But thou laughest too with May,
And dost with April ferry.

Art thou stale as Time now is ?
Cowslips they are yellow :
Spring for all the centuries
But grows more fair and mellow.

CYRIL TOURNEUR

AMID the tempest's momentary lull

He stands with bloody feet ; blind lightnings
climb

And clasp and girdle him from time to time.

His voice makes ev'n the storm's dire mandate null.

Instinctively he seems to stoop and cull

The crimsonest blossom in the bowers of crime ;
His murderous hands, which murder's own
begrime,

Hold high the gaping image of a skull.

'Tis brimmed with blood : we shrink, yet as we
shrink

Our lips are not all loth to drain and drink

Right to the dregs this dreadful dreaded cup ;
And Tourneur smiles tempestuous where he stands,
While Vindici with dark abhorrent hands
Holds the bright cresset of his memory up.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

TWIN roses on a single stem,
 Their fragrance sweet befriends the air
As if dim Venus breathed on them
 From roselips not more dark and rare :
Fletcher, a radiant flower, a bloom
 Stamened with smiles, bright Fletcher whom
The muses marry with the dusk-haired gloom.

Twin roses on a single stem,
 Their colour stains the air with light
As if slim Venus wept o'er them,
 And left them ever brave and bright :
Beaumont, a fadeless bloom, a flower
 Bedewed with passion, pathos, power,
The lovelier, fresher for the falling shower.

THOMAS CAREW

GOD taught the gallant sea to sing,
And careless Love taught thee to lisp.
Green billow-bunch and foamy wisp
Their wind-inspired cantata bring,
For God taught the bass sea to sing.

Love taught thee how to lisp, not sing,
We mark thee by Love's astrolabe—
Thee, lisping like a rosy babe
Whose lips are musical with spring
Though never learned by Love to sing.

The poet teaches hearts to sing,
Love singing in his happy heart ;
And earth—the pearl-shaped earth—takes part
In loveliest fancies carolling,
For Love taught poets' hearts to sing.

ROBERT HERRICK

WHILE Herrick sang serenely like the thrush,
Ev'n as a wood-lark, whose impetuous gush
 Makes the full throat of every ring-dove fail,
 The silver tones of Herbert made the dale
Still as the press Death's feet, wine-purpled, crush.

The kine were wont to pass at eve and brush
Young dews from meadows daisy-bright and lush :
 Here Wither warbled as a nightingale,
 While Herrick sang.

Proud Nature wore her wede of greeny plush,
The leas were clad in velvet, and a hush
 Hung o'er the ocean as a holy veil

Till piny murmurs seemed to know and hail
The tide of Milton in its billowy rush
While Herrick sang.

QUATRAIN

HE loved good wine and midnight romp and revel ;
His lyric like shall never breathe again ;
Repentance, coming, saved him from the devil,
And won his voice for angels and for men.

MILTON
\\

MAJESTIC Milton, Britain's Paradise

Of Song, which walls of Heaven itself engird,
But once, before thy coming, had been stirred
By such as thee, who laugh at Death's device.
Fair Shakespeare first, whom all fair things
entice—

All lives, all tragedies—had passed, and heard
Strange sounds untold by any tell-tale bird,
Smelt odours never blown from groves of spice.

Ay, Shakespeare's coming was Creation—Morn ;
Then—ample eve dim-mellowing into night—
Camest thou, whose eyes the darkness doth adorn,
Who orb'st all Paradise with eyes of light—
In Heaven the heavenliest angel ever born,
The mightiest seraph in the ranks of might.

AN EPITAPH

ANOTHER Homer by the shore
Whose lasting rocks are writ with lore
 Beyond the mind's imagining—
 Beyond the ken of things that be :
John Milton with hierarchic pen
Proved well his province 'mong all men
 When mad Rebellion's billowy wing
 Had smote the ridgy English sea.

Through pitchy nights of civil strife,
A beckoning loadstar unto life,
 Persistently his genius shone,
 Undimmed by any pendent cloud.
And Cromwell—statuesque and grim—
Threw baleful shadows over him—
 Cromwell, the trumpeter of dawn—
 Cromwell, the dark and beetle-browed.

Though Milton's agate eyes were veiled,

His soul adventurously scaled

 The heavenly ladder star-let down,

 Thence looking on the world below.

His agate eyes were veiled indeed,

But God was with him in his need,

 And gilt the creased and cruel frown,

 And led him past the paths of snow.

To-day the name of Milton shines

While many a transient star declines

 Once all-conspicuous and fair ;

 And yet the years ascendant climb

The steps to high Eternity—

The end of earth and all—while he

 Commands the night unmoved and bare—

 A fitting epitaph to time.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING

WITH amorous and fantastic speech
The lesson of thy master,
Love, thou hast come at last to teach,
Whereat our hearts beat faster,
As waves, foam-bosomed, on the beach
Obey the wind their master.

Who'd not attend thy motley class
Though scholar born or dunce—
Lo, lord and lady, clown and lass,
If but to hear thee once
Who in the schools of Love didst pass,
While Death remained a dunce!

RICHARD CRASHAW

YOUR words are like dew
In the cup of the flower
When the spring is a bower
For Beauty and you.

Your words are like fire
In the flower of the dawn
When the yellow hills yawn
With light and desire.

Your words are like spring
In the dawn of the year ;
You illumine our fear
With faith, and we sing.

RICHARD LOVELACE

My cavalier, my cavalier,
To me thou art a bloomy sphere,
A cometary rose, cast down
From heaven by some dead dame, once dear
To dead men like thee in the silent town.

My cavalier, my cavalier,
In woe I weep thee like a tear,
I smile thee like a smile in gladness,
And through the reeds of time I hear
Lovelace, a laugh of joy, a sob of sadness.

JOHN DRYDEN

JOHN DRYDEN! How from that high name re-
bounds

A light that flashes and a foam that sounds.
Hey, what an English odour in the words!
What bulkèd glories each glad letter girds
Euphoniously and well! The mouth takes in,
'Mid couplet-clank of minors made to din,
A sense of honesty and flesh and blood;
And what associative memories flood
The listening strand of all the living mind
With conquered heroes and with conquests kind.
A burly Briton to the core, that's he!
Deep-chested, lunged with loud Eternity,
Broad-backed as old Olympus, he resists
The years with clenched unfavourable fists

In these great fisticuffs of changing Time—
John Dryden, backed by royalties of rhyme !
And sweeter moves his mention on the tongue
For his terse satires, for the songs he sung,
As Dryden sturdily to success fights on,
In giving hail and honouring him as John.

APHRA BEHN

BETWIXT Elizabeth and Charles,
The fields where woman sows were fen ;
The dog Rebellion's angry snarls
Had grated on the ears of men,
High dames had called their cavaliers,
Ere glory beckoned Aphra Behn.

Though virtue nodded in her novels,
Her heart was e'er awake ; the den
Where the blind beast of sin still grovels
She passed with haughty fears and, when
Vain women called their cavaliers,
Calm glory cautioned Aphra Behn.

Unmoved amid the clash and clamour,
Love, with new triumphs in his ken,
Gilds the old time with sleepy glamour—
With dusk of smiles and tears again—
And women rot with cavaliers,
But glory raises Aphra Behn.

.

ALEXANDER POPE

PUNY in figure but in fame a giant,
He graduates death, defaming and defiant.

His doctorate he hath received from Time,
Who capped him master of the arts of rhyme.

Through Asian realms which boasted no com-
mander,
Armied with words, he walked as Alexander.

No bigger than a pearl his pigmy heart,
Yet vast and sphered as was the globe his art.

No bigger than a flower, his soul was pregnant
With seeds which sow the spring and fancies
regnant.

By his own height he measured men, to find
How he o'ertopped them from his towering mind.

Then, then, he laughed, and his satiric laughter
Rung to Heaven's roof and startled every rafter.

He gowned his naked century with fire ;
He left the lashed vibrating like a wire.

The littlest of lives for life to jostle,
Death can but clasp his knees of fame—colossal.

THOMAS GRAY

If labour's love

Abide above

The glory unpremeditate,

There is no bard

The Muses guard

Than thee more grandly elevate.

If style refined

May safely bind

Heart's harvest into splendid sheaves,

Thy work will hold

When autumn old

With many another harvest heaves.

If men recall
The good, though small,
 Gift of true song 'tis man's to give,
Thou shalt not find
Their call unkind,
 Who hast but Fame's alternative.

And grave and sweet
Thine ears will greet
 The gracious welcome murmured down,
Whose numbers nurse
In vales of verse
 The babe-eyed spring we name Renown.

WILLIAM COLLINS

LIKE a lyric from the throat
Of the skylark is thy song,
And by Fancy's faery boat
Is thy spirit borne along
Through the lake where lilies float—
Lilies of immortal song.

As the fold of evening falls
Over thee, thou Bird of Song,
Rays from light's auroral halls
Dance about thee swift and strong,
And the voice of Rapture calls
From the sunlit cliffs of song.

Earth shall not to-day forget
 How she glows within thy song ;
Still she pays her starry debt,
 While the silent shadows throng
Theewards, whose bright numbers fret
 All the vaulted roofs of song.

GOETHE

A SONNET-SYMPHONY IN FOUR MOVEMENTS

I. Allegro.

HEAR how the notes now run, now burst, now bubble,
Now break in spray and take the hues of youth,
While at the flowing of the seas of trouble
Life's shore shows lovely with the pearl of truth—
While at the ebb of pleasure, slow and tidal,
Life's shore is lightened of the weeds of sin—
While sea and land rejoice in shadowy bridal—
While land and sea have no more love to win.
Now light, now lighter, come the flying notes,
Now swift and sweet, now sweetly, swiftly wild ;
Yet through their dizziest melody there floats
Sound as of song of bird or word of child ;
And ever when the notes are wildest seething
Deep, deeper, from beneath comes Nature's
breathing.

II. Legato

MANHOOD hath come, with loving, lovely fingers
 Touching the keys whence youth's wild prelude
 sprang,
And, while its charm of liquid sweetness lingers,
 Gone is the ruder noise that first outrang—
Gone is the din that galled and palled the senses,
 Stilled are the jars of every minor chord :
The grand crescendo of the soul commences,
 Slow swelling through the temple of the Lord.
The music grows and grows, slowly ascending
 An oceanic scale until the sound,
With heavenly antiphons of Nature blending,
 And deep as bayings of a noble hound,
Startles the future with its solemn presage.—
(Fate strains her ear to catch the heavy message.)

III. Andante

SLOW come the notes, but still the golden measure
 Swells loud and strong, to Nature grandly linkt,
And music tells the secret of her treasure,
 Slow spoken yet immeasurably distinct.
Time's foot upon the pedal now is heavy ;
 The notes give forth a thunder-throated bass,
Yet Life hath many a smile for Love to levy,
 And Love hath many a joy for Life to face.
God listens, and the ear of Heaven is husht ;
 Heaven hears, and space burns, yearns for light,
 and glows
As if the lily of creation blusht,
 Took fire and colour like a living rose ;
A tremor runs through all its starry petals,
Where like a bee the gold sun soars and settles.

IV. Adagio

SLOW come the notes and slower : they are ceasing

(Fate hearkens when the final note shall fall).

The night above and under is increasing

(Fate dreams she hears the Phantom's pealing
call).

Slower the notes and slower : they are dying

(Fate bends above with eager eyes and ears).

What sounds are these as of the breezes sighing ?—

(Fate thinks it is the drip of starry tears).

The music takes a lower key, and lower

(Fate listens for the last vast organ breath);

And slower come the notes, and ever slower

(Fate hears the beating of the heart of Death).

The notes are still : a god is soundly sleeping

(Fate bows her head, nor knows why she is
weeping).

CHATTERTON

SAD boyish wonder unsurpassed
In all the wondrous world,
God reads and loves your lines at last,
And, like a bush impearled,
Benecklaced gemmily with dew,
His love grows lightening over you
From out whose dust of death there grew
Fires ringleted and flames that curled.

Mad man-like boy unparalleled
In all the mazy past,
The gourd of your large destiny held
The clearest waters cast
From fountains of Futurity—
The thoughts of such a soul-to-be,
Whose passions surged, an opal sea
By hurricanes of life harassed.

Bad incarnation of the good
Which God to earth impelled,
Man's memory mellows as a wood
Edged with autumnal eld :
The boreal words of winds arouse
The rustle of its brown old boughs ;
Leaves die, but branchy hearts espouse
The spring again unquelled.

Lad, man, or boy—incarnate mood
Of good with evil glassed—
You move in mighty brotherhood
With every temporal blast.
Commemorative leaves die crumbling,
'Mid toss and turn of foliage tumbling,
But you, the tree, live always, humbling
The years that halt aghast.

THE HEAVENLY BOY

THE heavenly boy to Hell's own hideous town,
Where Fortune's filmy ribbons dance and dangle,
Came—heard the bells that should have hailed
him jangle,
Beheld the face that should have cheered him frown.
The heavenly boy, who strove to net renown
In golden meshes of his mind, and tangle
Life in the webs of song, saw Hunger strangle
Hope after struggling hope—dash each one down.
Then died the dauntless heart. Too grim the trial
That left the seas for wine, the winds for bread,
And gave at last, when gaunt-limbed faith had
fled,
And all save Death had given his songs denial,
The flattering poison in the accursèd phial,
To filch a Shakespeare from the world instead.

WILLIAM BLAKE

A NIGHTINGALE whose solitary song

Rose through the night when not a star had
stirred,

An elfin thing, a faery-feathered bird

With wood-notes strange, yet strung to hope and
strong :—

As such wert thou, ringed round with many a wrong,

By shadows blotted from our sight and blurred,

Thy cloying voice unheeded and unheard,

Though God, enrapt, was listening all along.

God-chosen seer who sang of Heaven on earth,

Chanter of childhood's all-enchanting days,

Dragged down by sorrow, dogged through life by
dearth,

The names of most who knew thee are Decay's

While thine is Fame's : night bore the dawn,
whose birth

Halos thy head in Love's transfiguring blaze.

ROBERT BURNS

WHEN England's moon of Poesy waxed faint,
One man rode by whose steed's tempestuous
hooves

Cast up the loam from long-forgotten grooves,
Careering onward knowing no restraint.

A new dawn stretched her fingers forth to paint
New pictures on the sky where Shakespeare
moves

Sunlike, and Milton's mighty voice reproves
The thunders muttering forth their deep complaint.

The woods grow bright, the breath of spring returns
Giving its fragrance to the blue free air,
And still it shines for ever fresh and fair,
The homely name of Scotland's homely Burns—
A star the fragrance of the night inurns,
With shining guerdon of the dawn to share.

SONG

LIGHT and shade together !

Day and night as one !

Winter wooing summer weather !

Snowflakes making love unto the sun !

Love whereon the globe of misery turns !—

That's the life of Robert Burns.

Tears and smiling kisses !

Hopes and fears and doubts !

Petty pains and giant blisses !

Death who whispers 'gainst a world that
shouts !

Life no spirit in the live world spurns !—

That's the heart of Robert Burns,

WORDSWORTH

HIS voice was low and curiously clear—

The blackbird's song at chime of vesper bell ;

His woodland genius breathed a gentle spell

On every flower—o'er every vale and mere.

An anchorite, he gazed with eyes austere

On worldly things, yet, when his glances fell

On Nature whom he learned and lived so well,

Love loosed his lips for her he deemed so dear.

His song was fresh and free and full of rest

As when pure April touches lips with May ;

Life ebbed away and, ebbing, made him blest :

Death closed the long-drawn avenues for aye

As Vesper seals the after-doors of day,

And Evening takes him trembling to her breast.

24th December 1892,

SIR WALTER SCOTT

THOU shouldst have lived in peerless Shake-
speare's age :

A towering lineage in those days began,
All men gigantic like thyself, one man—
The best tragedian on a splendid stage.
Ben Jonson would have loved thee—grand old
sage ;
All varying souls have set thee in their van ;
And Shakespeare, chieftain of that glorious clan,
Have owned thee purest of his parentage.

Big stalwart son of Shakespeare, pure and proud,
Purer for pride of such paternity,
Thy poems, large and rugged though they be,
Live—hold within their limbs a blood endowed
With life whose tenets are proclaimed aloud
In deathless vigour by the voiceful sea.

COLERIDGE

WITH spacious gaze he looked o'er earth and saw
Life waiting like a spirit to be clad
In raiment of his own fair soul, which had
Been woven in the looms o' the sun, while awe
O'er Nature as a veil began to draw.

He looked again, and a calm sorrow bade
Tears speak the anguish of his soul grown sad
In fruitless strife with some occulted law.

And, then, ah ! then, the vast, the far clear gaze
Grew dim, and bodeful portents of to-morrow
Weighed heavily on the lids that sought to
borrow

Some slumber from so many restless days,
While on he sat amid the soft pale haze,
Sucking sweet honey from the lips of sorrow.

WITH MR. SWINBURNE'S ESSAY

IN Asia (so the lips of legend say)

Are footless birds which wing in endless flight

The lucent vastitude and length of light ;

Not pausing at the rosy close of day,

But ever wheeling on their aerial way

Through dark immeasurable deeps of night,

Fed upon dewes descending silver-bright,

With heaven for nest and all the stars for prey.

And thou—sweet unity of light and tone,

Coleridge—wert one of air's own sun-fledged tribe,

With all the girdling round of air for zone,

Till earth held up her great green bosom's bribe

For thee whose dewes of song the flowers imbibe,

Whose cage was earth, whose element heaven
alone.

HIS LIFE

AMID the mystic glamour shed
From jasper skies arched overhead
 He walked supremely lone—
An ancient god revived on earth,
Whose message of mysterious birth
 Described alike our own.

His voice was tragically hushed,
And, while the waves of being rushed
 Towards blank oblivion's shore,
He chose to sound the deeps unseen—
The hieroglyphic stars would screen
 Some long-forgotten lore.

Like to a bird with caged wings,
Against the brittle bars of things
 He broke in awful speech ;

And, moving with the drowsy breeze,
Saw phantom shapes of phantom trees
Which oft he strove to reach.

Upon the plains of life he cast
His mighty figure as he passed
In shadowgraph sublime ;
And in the casket of his song
His memory lies embalmed from wrong—
Death's legacy to Time.

QUATRAIN

HIS spirit wandered like a golden bee
From bloom to bloom with honey-heavy thighs ;
Wing-wet with dews of strange Philosophy,
It staggers on, now drones, and, droning, dies.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

LANDOR, the earl of Love's own golden shire,
Of Love's bright county, of the land of Love—
Who of all nineteenth century spirits above
Sits back to back with Beauty, lyre to lyre
With Light—our Landor who than hope soars
higher,
As eagle or hawk that soars beyond the dove—
Our Landor, whom the luminous centuries glove
With glowing jewelries of starry fire—

Our Landor takes the years upon his name
As some old Paladin on his brassy shield
The hurtling darts and javelins of the field :
They glance off null from such a round of fame
As guards the heart which stands to-day re-
vealed
In one pure passion of effulgent flame.

THE SEA-SHELL

WHAT, peerless Landor, shall I call thee,

What—Englishman or Greek?

Hellenic lands and hands enthrall thee;

Or is it Latin thou dost speak,

While Englishman I call thee

'Twixt Englishman and Greek?

Greek, Latin, aught, I love thee, Landor;

So sea-shells love the sea,

That loves them for their loving candour;

And, so beloved of thee,

My heart, a shell, here whispers, Landor!

Here murmurs of the sea.

CHARLES LAMB

SWEET star, that through the impervious London
fog

With many another glowing planet swam,
Yet none so lovable as thou, sweet Lamb,
Who knew'st not brake nor brier nor bush nor bog
Forming great Nature's verdurous synagogue,
Thou ev'n art with me everywhere I am,
Lit by thy light of genial epigram
At dawn—at dusk, which is day's epilogue.

Crowned with our ducal coronet of love,
Thou bidd'st Ulysses wander at vagary :
That constellation of Elizabeth—
That galaxy of names which know not death—
Crown thee with fire ; and at the name of Mary
Shakespearean preludes thunder from above.

BYRON

BYRON I see on Fame's most perilous peak,
Scorn-lipped, defiant, like a fallen god,
Whose spirit bows not to the ruler's rod,
Who laughs at all man holds in reverence meek.
Dire-darting, bold, his eyes in anger speak
Though he is silent. Where no foot hath trod
Is he unalterably apart, and shod
With fire of youth, for age is still to seek.

Gone, gone, he is no more. Death hath dispelled
The image from my sight, and now I see
But what remains of what he was to be.
Fate should have let him live, nor e'er withheld
Days whence he might have won, as once he
quelled,
The sombre Titaness, Eternity.

SHELLEY

SWALLOW with sad eyes set toward the sun !

Sweet singing-bird with struggling wings, astray

From the fragrant palace of eternal May,

What while the roseate blood of youth doth run

In joyous pulses through the year begun,

Thy bird-notes, clearer than the clarion day,

Quicken the violets' colour as they pray

In spring's green convent which their leaves have
won.

Ah ! Shelley, whom the maiden month reveres,

Washing the glistening cheeks of earth with dew

Each year the violets live again—renew

Their dim noviciate of holy tears,

And Love, with eyes of memorable blue,

Intones thy requiem, and April hears.

THE DEATH OF SHELLEY

FAR up the Gulf—far up the ‘twinkling bay’—
Spurred by the freshening breeze, the *Don Juan*
sped
With him o’er whom God’s hallowing hand had
shed
No transient light or faint inconstant ray ;
For genius ever shines, nor knows to pay
Oblivion’s toll extorted from the dead ;
But death was hovering darkly overhead
With glittering talons sharp and set for prey.

The darkness cleared . . . and, cradled on his
breast—
Alastor’s breast so marred by sorrow and wrong—
The strong sweet fruit of him whose voice, once
strong,
Was hushed in golden tones to golden rest—
Hyperion—lay, like Shelley’s name impressed
Upon the marble of immortal song.

6th January 1892.

QUATRAIN

LIFE was a lake wherein he saw reflected
The stars that lit the heaven of his wide mind ;
His dreams were palaces the clouds erected—
The bright brief masonry of air and wind.

THE CENCI

DARK gloom as of the tomb ;
Grim light as from the night
Half-perisht stars illume ;
Yet one star—Shelley—set imperishably bright.

Dim fire as of desire ;
Stark dread that overhead
Bids all beneath expire ;
But one star—Shelley—shut from death 'mong
all the dead.

THE MEMORIAL OF KEATS, JULY 16TH, 1894

To Poesy

*MAIDEN and Mother, whom this Old World greets
With love the greater since his love was such
As scorned Fate's felon hands, which come and clutch
The Poet's heart hiding its honied sweets !
Mother and Maiden, whom the New World meets
With ministries twice tender insomuch
As Lowell's memory tingles in the touch,
Renews the glory of thy god-son, Keats !—*

*Poesy, now that Keats wins his reward,
Now, when the viols and horns of Love are loud,
Standing between the Nations, woman-lord,
Is not thy bowed heart all alert and proud,
Moves not a music through each nerve and chord,
Seeing at last the Laureate, Keats, endowed ?*

KEATS

TO-DAY he lives again who died so young,
And Love, who listened to the songs he sung,
Brings Keats's crown across the vale of years,
Wet with the rain of great Alastor's tears :
The magic nightingale that trilled at dark
Drew forth the vocal tribute of the lark.
Others have plumbed the deeps of destiny more,
Or striven to heights where such as Dante soar ;
But who, like Keats, hath sung so richly sweet,
Or laid such largess at the Muses' feet ;
Who drawn from out that fount the chosen reach
Such full luxuriance of untiring speech ;
Or who 'mong those who lived to half life's prime
With such high promise swept the harps of time ?

ROSE PARABLES : NO. I

OF old a monk, whose saintly head was blest,
But knew to sing the Blessed Virgin's fame,
And others filled his cup with wine of blame :
Poor fools who thought their thoughtless prayers
the best.

But, when Death showed the glittering plains of rest,
Five roses crimson from his mouth there came—
Symbols of Holy Mary's hallowed name :
His love and zeal had stood the golden test.

So Keats to-day, whose soul, made sweet by song,
But ill could brook life's random shafts shot-strong,
Is marked by all, despite of Death's defeats—
So he is crowned, while widowed Autumn greets
Gray Winter, with a rose for every wrong—
A rose to wreath around the name of Keats.

A NIGHTINGALE

HE came to Song's alluring fount
With wondering eyes of fear and wist ;
He watched the Virgin Huntress mount
Empanoplied in mail of mist.

His soul a flagon was, brimmed o'er
With earth the vineyard's ruddiest wine ;
His heart was like a hive to store
The bees of pity all-divine.

He had a life-time to achieve—
A life-time with a life's applause :
Renown was all Death chose to leave,
Grim Lord who makes and breaks all laws.

Renown was all he left, but soon
It widened out and grew and grew

To ample beauty like the moon
'Mong stars which beautify the blue.

Upon the firmament of Fame
When setting stars and sunrise meet,
What shineth brighter than his name,
His name who sang so briefly sweet?

Like his own nightingale he sings
To all the stars which tarry by ;
And like a nightingale's his wings
Were clipped when he but knew to fly.

LEOPARDI

YOU are moving cumbered like the moon
In folds of cloud ;
Life clings to you, a clammy shroud,
Abhorrent, till you sing, when soon
The heavy folds fall down,
And pitilessly proud,
You chant of gloomy Death—the lonely town,
Whose glimmering squares are peopled by the
dead.

Death is a thing of sombre joy,
A wondrous weight
Of gladdening woes conglomerate,
And, when you hymn it, life's alloy

All unremembered lies

I' the record of dark Fate—

And Death seems grander for your groans and
sighs,

Grander and dearer for your tears down-shed.

HEINE

QUAFFING the poison-cup of tears and laughing!

Singing of laughter while to-day is bringing

Sorrow to saddle on the mad to-morrow!—

Madness and mirth and mockery and sadness!

Tiny as babe or god-gigantic, Heine

Lashes the world with whip which whirls and flashes.

CHARLES WELLS

ONE work alone is left—

One honey-coloured weft—

One glorious weaving of the golden shuttle—

One golden issue of the glorious loom !

The Muses might be justified of theft,

And filch the fabrics from the brain which cleft

The loom of song, the shuttle

So great, so sure, so subtle.

The gladiate fingers Doom

Points through the piteous gloom

Mark him as one who loved life's breath, love's

breathing

More than the incense from the church of Fame.

Robed, glorified with glory of one name—

Shakespeare's—he comes, where Shakespeare's
self once came,

At last to hear it seething—

God's oceanic breathing.

VICTOR HUGO

GOD of the Church of the immortal soul,
Lord of the might-built temple of the mind,
Healer who renderest sight unto the blind,
Who see and bless thee in their turn—the goal
Life sets apart for man is death—the toll
Death takes of man is life, to pay the Wind
Which sweeps Time onward, while the Past,
behind,
Lies like a pile of withered leaves that roll—

But life had more for thee than death, and death
Took more of thee than life for toll or tax,
For death took light from earth when life from
thee.

Thy goal was with calm Æschylus, whose breath
Came back like fire along the glittering tracks
O' the chariot wheels of Immortality.

HIS NAME

SOME names come golden from the hive of speech

Like bees, and suck the rose, Eternity,

Dry of its honey which the stars beseech :

So with thy name, great Hugo, and with thee.

Some souls come golden from the haze of things

Like suns, and gratify the air with light :

Hugo, so thine in daylight burns and sings ;

And sings and burns, although unseen, through
night.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES

ONE shadow haunted him amid all others,
One face among all faces
Leered from behind with that grim mirth which
smothers
Love's smiles and kindred traces,
Killing Love's tears with lethal mocking breath,
'Mid antics strange and ghastly odd grimaces—
Death.

A covert lover and an open hater,
Loving his dreams and dreaming,
Hating his Hell—to wake—a gladiator,
With gory glaive there streaming
He slew Life's lions in the crimsoned strife,
Then met one match, in the arena gleaming—
Life.

Death's ancient mockeries and dark jests were
better

Than that defeat's outliving,
So, freeing soul of every fleshly fetter,
He turned away, and, giving
His heart to Fame's eternal shibboleth,
Won the dread humorist who wins the living—
Death.

'DEATH'S JEST-BOOK'

DEATH'S Jest-Book ! How the words are bowed
and weighted

With jocular endearments as of Death !

What earthy fragrances of graves ! What breath
As of dim crime, deeds darkly instigated !

Grim ghastly mirth it is lurks here, created

By hands unheavenly ; Folly muttereth

Rude ribald hints of Hell to unfix the faith

Of wisdom smiling to the gods Hell hated.

Beddoes, the world and all things worldly are built

Of Life and Death. In life thy heart alone

Knew Death sun-towering o'er the world, his
throne,

And, dead at last, but died to rise up gilt

With gold from Heaven's bright nectar never spilt,

And life by all the living never known.

EDWARD FITZGERALD

(OMAR KHAYYAM)

TRANSLATING 'Omar,' it was thine to touch

His glory with fresh glories of thine own,

To tip his orient arrows silverly

With the bright metal of thy brain 'gainst time,

'Gainst time and the retributory years

Before whose face must reputations rust,

And favours rot against the world once won.

So Fame (whom thou didst love not overmuch,

Loving the throned shy seasons on their throne,

The darkness wombing dark Eternity—

Loving the sea, and winds that mock and mime)

So Fame, who found thee in the end, with tears

Touches thy tomb 'gainst time, and all thy dust

Thrills as the hills delivered of the sun.

THOMAS GORDON HAKE

SLOWLY earth guides thee o'er a shining track

To those bright pastures of memorial youth

Where Love, lip-linked with life's auroral truth,
Laughed loud at Age, who waited to attack.

Now on the greyhound years—a princely pack

Crowding, with foam on tongue and mouth and
tooth,

To lick thy hand—Time lifts the lash of ruth,
And bids them—Time the Huntsman—bids them
back.

Dim memories risen of many an olden friend,

Far twilight-march of many a sunlit day

When smiles were mirrored in 'life's eyes of gray':
These, linked to fact of freshening friendships, tend
To gild Death's face with lights that ev'n transcend
The gold that once on hills of sunrise lay.

A NATURE-FRIENDSHIP

Dr. T. Gordon Hake and Theodore Watts

I SAW the Mother throned alone and regal
On mountain-tops and hills of driven snow ;
From where she sate her gaze beheld the eagle—
A finite atom circling far below.

Close at the foot of her, 'the mighty mother,'
Were two whose eyes sought solace from her own,
Two—friend and friend—nay, brother linkt with
brother

In many a vigil by the Mother's throne.
I would have spoken, but, my tongue refusing,
The words fell back still palpitant on the soul ;
While my heart said, 'They are of Nature's choosing,
They guard her lovely lair—the Poet's goal.—
Armed of her right, they bid the stars defiance,
That laugh, yet lend their light's divine alliance.'

THE PARABLE-POET

11th January 1895

FOR him a new day dawns—the day of death—

The great new day that lives and grows not old:

The friend of Borrow breathes no mortal breath,

His eyes are covered and his heart is cold.

His fleshly heart! but while the world draws breath

Never the heart of his pure deeds of old,

His soul's performance disconcerting death—

The heart that burns although all hearts be cold.

Those names that Nature speaks with one deep
breath—

Science and Poesy—those consorts old,

King, Queen upon the thrones of life and death—

Mourn a sweet subject in whom faith seems cold—

Our Hake, the record of whose songful breath

Fuels life's fires upon the hearth of death.

GEORGE BORROW

A true prose poet

*HE loved the open plains, the pleasant fields,
The high furze-furrowed hills, the heaving fells,
The breath of heather, sight of heather-bells,
Loved all the nameless pleasures Nature yields.
He roamed old England's odorous woods and wealds,
Sought solitude in shade of daisy-dells,
And found the fane where fadeless Beauty dwells,
Whom vestal Truth with silver armour shields.
Gypsy in soul, with gypsy freedom he
Owned himself Nature's votary, and was free ;
Love bound him to her with a better bond
Than light to earth when the bright dawn hath
dawned,
And drew the curtain back that he might see
Wonders of other worlds that were beyond.*

2nd November 1892.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

SAPPHO sang not of love alone to woman,
For man and all the marvellous world holds human
May hear what is ; and so, through life or death—
Great namesake of our eagle Elizabeth—
Proud Queen in spirit with the world for throne—
Your songs were not for woman sung alone,
But equally for man. That day you took,
As eyes take love like colour in their look,
One man for husband was your spirit's crowning,
When Barrett mellowed to the music Browning,
And Browning's kisses, melting on your mouth,
Seemed softer for its glamour of the south.
What were your lives : two mighty rivers, married
To a solemn mightier music, onward carried
To swell the ocean of Eternity ;

Two far miraculous moons for Death to see
Circling and setting with the planet Time ;
Two mountains none but clouds and stars might
climb—

Heights Himalayan toppling skies determine,
Robed in the glacier's everlasting ermine ;
Two minds, two hearts, made possible and packt
With the pure import of each act and fact
Love left upon your love ! If God's word willed
The world of womankind should instant build
A throne for one to dignify and queen
With soul's demeanour sacredly serene,
Yours were the regnant honours, yours the name
Announced by woman's and by man's acclaim—
Alone, Titanically superhuman,
Grave sphinx, half-lion, with the face of woman.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

THE MINSTER SPEAKS

'Give me my dead'!

'GIVE me my dead. 'Tis I alone can claim

The bones of Time's illustrious compeer.

Give me my dead ; and crown the dying year

With blooms of love made deathless by his fame.

Man sings in vain: no mouth but mine shall frame

Speech dear enough for him the world holds dear—

No voice but mine, whose iron tongue makes clear

The deep pronunciation of his name.

This solemn pile shall pillow his great head :

The immemorial cenotaph of time

May house the changeless splendours of his

rhyme ;

But, now the poem of his life is read

And Hallam hails him in that "golden clime,"

His bones are mine : God, give me up my dead.'

DEATH ?

WHO would twit the twilight
Because it loved the light ?—
Death with gentle shy light
Adored him—ever-bright—
Loved him in his glory,
His opulent sunset rolled
Round the years gone hoary,
Transforming them to gold.

Died he not as others ?—
He leant but on Death's arm
Gentle as a brother's,
And, robed with solemn charm,
Like a king primeval
Still crowned and with his rod,
'Mid our hearts' upheaval,
Went joyfully to God.



THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

POET of the lyre of gold,
If I could a moment hold
 It in my hands,
Then might I some justice do
To the songs thy fancy blew
 From faery lands
Where the greeny billows drew
 Towards the golden sands.

Poet of the heart of gold,
If my spirit might unfold
 Its wings of love,
Singing it would soar to thee,
Soar to heaven's enazured sea—
 A silver dove ;

Thou mightst give some heed to me
From thy height above.

Poet of the soul of gold,
Winged with ecstasies untold
I then would fly,
Seek the plains of earth below,
Glad to hear thee singing so
Up in the sky,
And, amid thy lyric flow,
Sing of thee and die.

ROBERT BROWNING

BEING a poet, he was still a man,
And loved all mankind with a love empowered
To pierce the gloomy clouds when destiny
lowered,
When doubt loomed up, or wars of soul began.
God built his brain from that colossal plan
Which served for Shakespeare's; forest-like it
flowered ;
One foot on earth and one in Heaven, he towered,
Taking Time's girth 'tween thumb and finger's span.
Thus as he stood, gartered with galaxies,
Knee-deep among the stars, his eye took range
Of calm creation stretching solemn, strange—
An azure manuscript of worlds and skies—
And his ear heard, through the long nave of
change,
The Amen of Eternity arise.

THE DEATH OF BROWNING

THE end was near ; and, pictured on the ceiling,
‘ An Eagle and a Serpent wreathed in fight ’ :—
Relaxing speed in air’s most dizzy height,
‘ Around, around, in ceaseless circles wheeling. ’—
What thoughts, what memories, vividly revealing
The land that lay behind the pale of night,
Flowed up, while Death’s revivifying light
Grew stronger than the stars with eyes appealing !

The watchers, weeping, saw the end was o’er
When the deep bell of dim San Marco spake
In muffled tones, as mourning for his sake—
When the great soul set sail for the great shore
With Time’s own ‘vale’ sounding in his wake,
And Death to be his pilot evermore.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

COLOSSAL, hidden in the shadow falling

From thy one shape, which fills the round of
Time,

Thou, mounting upward, hearest voices calling,

Upward, to win the height whose dizziness,
appalling,

Keeps others back who came intent to climb.

Brave mountaineer of Mount Eternity,

Where giant Milton, like a guide, goes leading,
The height attained, thou mayst look down and
see

Thy Festus at the base firm-planted like a tree,

An epic oak to life and thee receding.

Fear thou not Death: he builds thy triumph
higher.

Death is new life to those who leave behind
A heaven of work which brings true heaven the
nigher,

A truth whose lips prove Death a charlatan and
liar,

A Festus globing all the human mind.

EMILY BRONTË

DEAR daughter of the mourning Muses,
Maid-minstrel of the stern man-hearted moors,
Spring never spreads but it infuses
Its singing bird-breath sweetly into yours,
And you re-rise, and sing, and are
A moon 'mong women and to men a star.

Dead daughter of the mourning Muses,
Girl-wife asleep with old Eternity,
Spring-blossoms from their carven cruses
Pour dewy medicines in your ear, and see!
You stir and wake to singing soon,
Star of mankind whom women call the moon.

Clear singer to the sun, your poem

Had air for rhythm and the winds for rhyme ;

Its silver beats were but the poem

Which yet would gather to a golden chime :

Spring takes it up and sings instead

Till Death ev'n frowns among the sable dead.

Dread singer of one burning story,

One ode imperial unto love and hate,

That is your victory, that your glory,

Your tragic triumph o'er the Fiend of Fate—

That still you sing when Spring draws breath,

Still follow Summer in the face of Death.

LECONTE DE LISLE

NAUGHT interrupts the changeless march of
Nature,

No hand usurps her offices august
Whose height admits the sun's high candidature,
But bars all men from such ascents of trust.

The earth whirls on as ever, naught disturbing
The mighty motions of the wheel of space ;
Fate ever riding, guiding, reining, curbing
The charger, Chance, in its predestined race.

It leaps the hurdles of our earthly vision :
' 'Tis Chance,' we cry ; but all the while 'twas
Fate

Impelled the charger to the leap's decision,
And spurred all Nature with impulsions great.

Nor Chance nor Fate are of man's nomenclature ;

 Their names are of the world's their powers
 control :

Man hath no power to stay the steps of Nature

 With hand or heart or sword or sound or soul.

And so it is that thou, the Prince Imperial,

 Since Hugo passed, of Song's bright court in
 France—

Thou who hast hymned the world, the vast sidereal

 Prolonged performances of Fate and Chance—

Thou, who art Poet of the Past and Future,

 Unmarked by Nature to the grave dost go,

While she, with joining and with seam and suture,

 Death's garment edge to edge with Life's doth
 sew.

Nature, she heeds not Man, but, grandly heedless

 Of aught, works on amid the golden dusk,

Though all the hearts of all mankind be seedless,
And her own heart be as a hollow husk.

.

They bore thee hence with chants and songs
funereal ;

She heeded not, intent upon the goal ;
But man, who knows what is in life imperial,
Marks well the passing of thy princely soul.

COVENTRY PATMORE

A POEM is a violet

Grown in the poet's April heart—

A tangible odour found and set

Beneath the sunlight-smiles of Art—

Life's very breath when low she speaks

Into the shadowing ear of God,

And feels the rose of awe upon her cheeks.

Thy heart is as a garden-close

Where mighty—gentle—fingers set

Each heavenly seed of song which grows,

Art-sunned, to a perfect violet.

The air is sweet ; and angels sing

Hosannas to the Gardener, God,

Who joys to see the flowers that love Him spring.

EBENEZER JONES

HIS greatness was not like the tower
Heaven's architectural azure builds,
But secret like the yellow flower
Which God, the self-same artist, gilds.

The sunrise decorates the sky
With spiral stairs of soaring flame ;
To the least flower that opens eye
The sunrise gives a golden frame.

In like wise greatness such as his
To God can claim relationship ;
The flower, the field where the flower is,
Are kindred of His heart and lip.

A Poet, his high themes were great

Though oft he stumbled when he ran ;

His bardic heart was fortunate

In beating through the breast of Man.

And, when he died, the Man died too,

Till one day chance's strange regard

Found the Man's heart still beating through

The undying body of the Bard.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

SMOOTH-CHEEKED, with eyes—inscrutable as
Hell—

Shadowing the soul that looked on Hell and smiled,
He breathes from out the portrait—he who wiled
The only secret Venus had to tell
From lips whence Death's black incantations fell
Darkling. 'Tis he, the Poet, Venus' child,
Who knew the blue seas flowering myriad-isled—
Baudelaire, adorable white infidel.

Comes he to mock me, for the heavy mouth,
Wet with the honey-dews of sin of old,
Curls, and the animal leers from out his eyes?
And in dim chambers of the Asian South,
Through clouds of cloying incense, I behold
The face of him who spat on Paradise.

FLEURS DU MAL

THE unnameable luxuriance of thy name—

Each clinging tendril and tentative shoot—

Climbs sheer to starward and takes heaven-
ward root,

Twined round the firm foundations of thy fame.

Blue blooms of fire and purple globes of flame—

A many-coloured fruit—

Show forth, and loudly lyre and viol and flute

Make music, for the lark hath here no claim

And Nature's self is mute.

As men, who kneel in some cathedral, faint

And passionless and purged of all desire,

Rise in each lifted rapture of the quire,

And in the vast stained windows strive to paint,

'Mid blazoned shape of Saviour and of saint,
In crimson script of fire
Their hearts' pure pain, thy flute, thy viol, thy
lyre,
Fledge many a flight to God, whose sweet restraint
Makes thine own Hell thrice dire.

QUATRAIN

THOU wert not one to kiss the heel of God,
Or own His blessing when it bloomed and fell :
Thy way was where not ev'n His feet had trod—
Minstrel of sin, and troubadour of Hell.

27th January 1893.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

POET and scholar, tragically wise !

Beloved poet and admired sage !

You breathe revived from every smiling page ;

You live in every line which vivifies ;

You look with neutral universal eyes

From every thought: Death cannot catch or cage

Your birdlike beauties, nor touch you with age,

For Song lives ever though the poet dies.

From poem-peaks with snows of rhyme impearled,

You look, still living in your chiselled lays ;

And, as 'mong men your calm terrestrial gaze

Saw life, a leaf in fateful whirlwinds whirled,

So, dead, your spirit from your verse surveys

The leaves and blossoms of the branching world.

MORTIMER COLLINS

CROWNED round with lovely lily-diadems,
With limbs of ivory and of milky pearl,
To me Love came, gold-haired as any girl,
And lo, rathe roses burgeoned from their stems !
When he but spake, his lips were rich with gems,
And in his voice sang every morning merle ;—
To me Love came, when Spring bade cloudlets
curl,
And willows loved their shadows in our Thames.

'Twas in the faery realm of thy romance,
Thou towering lover of green English lanes,
Binding our hearts to Heaven with azure chains
Forged of the mind's divine inheritance,
Strong worker of rose-miracles that dance
In sight of man to spite his pigmy pains.

THE BIRDS

IN white or golden weather
 When flakes or heat prevail,
 Earth still had joys in hail
For thee, sweet bird, whose feather
Went glad and glib together
 With robin or nightingale.

And glib and glad together
 The robin and nightingale,
 With whom all songs prevail,
Of whatsoever feather
In white or golden weather
 Will give thee golden hail.

GEORGE MEREDITH

THE seasons filing
Through the year
Entrance its smiling
Amber sphere
With beguiling
Sounds we hear—
The four-fold harmonies hurled
Through the world.

The first is Springtime,
Lightly heard ;
The primal wing-time
Meet for bird,
Made to bring Time
Buds unstirred :

That is thy smile, with laughter
Gurgling after.

'Tis Summer second
Sings and glides
As if it reckoned
Beauty's tides—
Summer, beckoned
By fair brides :
That is thy warm-voiced woman,
Heavenly-human.

Then Autumn sinking
Deep in sheaves ;
Like armour clinking,
Clash of leaves
Forging, linking,
Mail or greaves :
That is thy satire rattling,
Girt for battling.

And Winter lastly
Whistles, shrills,
With bulk built vastly
Like the hills,
Locking fastly
Icy rills :
That is the wide white fame
Of thy name.

The months too clamber
Through this sphere
Whose globèd amber
Is the year ;
Drum and tambour,
Talking clear,
Tell each a glory thine
All-divine.

A BROTHERLY FRIENDSHIP

To W. M. Rossetti

*BROTHER of him who loved the bright white flocks
Of Beauty penned from hungry wolves of Sin,
When heaven above was as a gaming box,
And all the stars as dice for Fate therein,
Found not thine ear some music in the rattle,
Bidding previsions of the future wake,
Saying, though Man 'gainst Envy's glaive make battle,
Our Lord shall triumph—Love shall win the stake?
He lies in hest and hearing of the sea.
That brassy orchestra of Nature plays
The oratorio of Eternity
Unto the beat of Gabriel's golden days.
Hath Fate cast wrongly? Time's vast hand gives
motion,
And deeper grows the music of the ocean.*

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

DEAD poet, if with Dante thou art now—

Great Dante set in Heaven a sombre tree—

Then will his massive bulk pay thanks to thee
With beautied shade of many a bearing bough.

His silver dew drops down-falling on thy brow

Will keep thee cool, and all thy being will be

Sung to a sweeter and serener key

Than life's malevolent ministers allow.

There, high in Heaven, thy sweetest heart, thy wife,

Thy heart's own heart, thy loved Elizabeth,

From world-lips hallowed of the spirit's breath
Will breathe such wind of kisses on thy strife

That all the moving world might long for death,
So they could gaze for evermore on life.

AT CHELSEA

I SAW Rossetti in his quaint old garden

At Chelsea stooping o'er a wondrous harp ;

At first the sounds were soft, then seemed to harden

Till every tone came querulous and sharp.

'His soul's great harp,' I said. The music
blundered :

Life spake too sudden in his ear grown deaf ;

But soon again the strings took fire and
thundered,

The music mellowed to the lower clef.

Another hand had struck the starry strings

(I saw the poet weep, and then grow still)—

A hand that knew the clasp of Song's high kings,

Yet wore the gauntlet of a higher will.

I saw Fate's smiling lips, which oped in pleasure,

While loud, and louder, swelled the poet's measure.

CHLORAL

SUN-TRESSED, and radiant as the light auroral,
The attendant Hours troop ministerially round
The altar of his soul, and see it crowned
With full-leaved favours and with love-knots floral.
The star-accoutred future, loud and choral
With snatches of the present, gathers sound ;
But scouts and spies from deadly depths
profound
Foretolden Death or Death's grim agent, chloral.

Chloral !—the word is terrible and dire
As with clandestine interviews of doom
Across the gulf of days, across the gloom,
By this one man to whom all harps aspire,
Who knows not sleep from death nor bed from
tomb,
Nor night from Hell nor his own heart from fire.

AT BIRCHINGTON-ON-SEA

ROSSETTI died on Easter Day ;

To God he mounted from his woes

As Christ in resurrection rose,

And, triumphing o'er night and day,

In Death became a light for aye.

On Easter Day Rossetti died.

I see him, sleepless, turn and toss :

Death took him, bleeding, from the cross—

Insomnia—whereon, crucified,

He hung, of sleep's dear use denied.

Rossetti died on Easter Day,

The day Christ rose to God of old.

Dawn builds a church of pearl and gold.

'EASTER, WHEREON CHRIST SET HIS RAY,

ROSSETTI DIED IN !' Let us pray.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

I

THY words are wine to faint and weary ;
To hungry hands thy faith is bread ;
Thy quiet prayers—wind-quiet and eerie—
Awaken if the weary faint,
Are dreams to deify the dead.

Thy kiss is light to eyes when weeping ;
To lips else dumb thy voice is breath ;
Thy breast, where sobs or sighs are sleeping,
Is pillow pure for weeping eyes,
Is bush to screen the bird from death.

Sun-hues about thee shine, dim graces
Colour thy form and holy hair.

Woman? I seek for sign or traces
Of earth whereto such graces shine,
Beatifying earth and air.

To me thou art that Mother, Mary,
Whom love and pity's pain sufficed,
For fancy—truth's true brother-fairy—
Hath worshipped thee as Mary-Mother,
Adoring all the world as Christ.

22nd July 1894.

II

THERE was great stir on earth to-day.

She, to whom Christ at christening came,

Went upward like a thin white flame

To dwell for aye

With her great namesake, Christ, whose fame

Enriches her Madonna's name

In Heaven to-day.

There was great stir in Heaven to-day ;

For she who to the temple, earth,

In joy's bright fulness, joy's bright dearth,

Brought song's bright ray,

Knows Heaven's unearthly bounds of birth,

Rejoices God, who lulls all mirth

On earth to-day.

There was great stir on earth to-day.

It seems as if the Old Year sang

Her songs for the last time, then sprang

Weeping away ;

Yet feel I not a single pang,

For her songs ring, as ne'er they rang,

On earth to-day.

There was great stir in Heaven to-day.

The New Year rose and took its station

At God's own side in jubilation :

I heard Him pray ;

And heard the sounding proclamation—

How all her songs should have God's dedication

On earth, in Heaven, always.

December 1894.

ALEXANDER SMITH

MOUNTING the ladder of thy lofty verse,
I reach at last the topmost rung—of gold.
The o'ergorgeous mists of metaphor disperse,
And, calm, the skies of life begin to unfold.

Up here, beside thee by the parapet
Of Heaven, no din nor discord moves and mars
God's peace, and thine, who art a ruby set
Deep in the sun-claspt bracelet of the stars.

QUATRAIN

HIS songs were echoes only of the spheres.
Men saw him come divine and gave him hail,
Then strove to pierce him with apostate spears
That struck but sparks from off his golden mail.

ROBERT, EARL OF LYTTON

PALE courtly poet nursing dreams
Half laughable, half tragic,
The moonbeam of your magic
Transforms the melancholy streams,
Where Marah moves in moan and dreams,
To waters—sweet—Elysian.

Your smile was like a wrinkled rose,
Your sorrow like a lily,
And, though the way was hilly,
You clomb till, at the perfect close,
The minarets of Beauty rose
Before your spirit's vision.

JAMES THOMSON (B. V.)

LIFE rose before him, pillared high in air

With pure nobility of line and curve,

And he, with youthhood at his side to serve,

Found all forms lovely and all faces fair.

Love strove with Death, for Fate had matched
the pair :

His sweetheart died, who held in sweet reserve

Love's joy. Ah ! then his hopes were seen to
swerve—

Faith stumbled on the stones of his despair.

This was thy work, thou enigmatic Fate ;

This transformation God to thee recorded ;

But every sorrow, girt with gall and sworded

With dread, 'gainst which he battled till too late,

On thee deals back the blows that once he warded

With sombre bursts of ineffectual hate.

B. V.

THIS London is a purple sea.

For winds, 'tis swept by Fortune's breath ;
Its waves are pain and poverty
Or riches Fortune scattereth :
Yet every wave in London's sea
Must break upon the reefs of death.

You knew its waves of pain, B. V.,
While others, blown by Fortune's breath
Beheld the wave, Prosperity,
Which broke on reefs naught shattereth ;
But pain, rebounding off, B. V.,
Foams back on life, defying death.

THE GLOOMY TOWN

THOU crude interpreter

Of all the curdling gibberish of Death

Whose monstrous and abominable breath,

Commemorative of the sepulchre,

Is wafted on the wind to earth,

Some empty devilry of odious Death

Seems to have waited on thy birth

And, gibing at the jocund earth,

Infected sea and air with ghoulish ghostly mirth.

Thou great astrologer,

Thee, by the bright horoscopy of Hope,

I greet with love the greater since who grope

In sorrow's universal massacre

Are Love's own children had by Life

 In some high holiday of heavenly hope ;

And, looking back upon thy strife—

Thy harrowing enmity with life—

Watch the assassin, Death, still gloating o'er the
 knife.

WILLIAM MORRIS

THEE I salute, not captain in the ranks
Of social crucial cause, nor architect
Planning new edificial rights to erect,
Nor swimmer 'gainst the millioned mountebanks ;
But as that Poet whom the Mother thanks
For service royally rendered to effect
The liberation of her dreams long-checked
By temporal chains whose heavy music clanks
Still on the ears emancipate of Man :
Thee I salute as Poet—yea, though reft
From Poesy, Poet—that the world, which cleft
The helm of Glory when thy fight began,
May still remember thou art live, art left,
Achilles-like, unconquered in the van.

THE EARTHLY PARADISE

THY dreams fall leaf-like from the flower thy brain,
Dripping with dews of visionary repose,
Come to men sleeping like the sleepy rain
Rimming the long dusk lashes of the rose
With lines of humid silver. Summer blows
Thy dreams to my feet as her green skirts trail by,
And now I dream, and now I yearn to die.

For thou hast led me to that hazy dreamland,
Where the sky faints into the purple sea,
Where the land, pure and pale, may never seem land
But one dim highway to Eternity,
Bereft of blossom and unblest with tree :
Lo, I am mixt corporeally with its sky,
And now I dream and now I yearn to die.

LOVE IS ENOUGH

MEN do not grasp the meaning of your might,
Hold no conception of your soul's true light
And lustre, inconceivable to man
While still you walk, for all men's eyes to scan,
Along these terraces and streets of strife,
Or wind the lanes of multitudinous life.
Knowing you mortal, men can have no thought
Of what you have hewn and built and shaped and
wrought
Out of the marble of mortality—
A mountainous fabric which the living see
With dazed dumb wonder at the wondrous hand
That wrought it—shaped and built and hewed
and planned,
Plenipotent. God grant your life be long,
Your northern seas of deep unsounded song

Flow deeper as the years, like icebergs, loom
Up from the unfathomable arctic gloom
Of sunless time : God grant you grow with age,
And joy ride ever in your equipage ;
But at your death alone will all men learn
Your soul's true lustre and true light eterne,
Your universal and eternal might,
Champion and cherished of defenceless right,
Chastiser feared of retrogressive wrong.
For death, so oft ennobled by your song,
Ennobles and enlightens life, and shows
The o'erlooked perfection hidd'n within the rose ;
And so shall death, ennobling you, enlighten
Your songs and you with afterlife, and brighten
Lips that the names of Shakespeare, Wordsworth
fill
With yet another and beloved Will.

JOHN, LORD DE TABLEY

MONARCHICALLY throned, august

As God embodied in the heavenly blue,
You, sidelong gazing downward on the dust,
May know my verses yearn to you,
May see the soul's flame flaring through,
And god me with your gaze's noble trust.

The imperial purple of your verse,

The potent pauses and the kingly heights
Of some pure passage terrible and terse,
The dignity of days and nights
Sphering alternate glooms and lights—
Hard glooms and lights no glooms might e'er
asperse—

These make you holy like the sun,
 Robe you with planetary religiousness,
Ensilver all your fame with gleams that run
 From earth's auroral loveliness,
 While your soul's fragrance comes to bless—
A world of roses glorified to one.

Great Caesar of the Rome of Art,
 Eternity your toga, and the years
Your yellow slaves, I, taking my small part
 In loving what Love's self reveres,
 Am corporate with the singing spheres,
And die a life-throb in Creation's heart.

THEODORE WATTS

PRIME absolute monarch, whose wide reign extends

O'er all the kingdom of imperial song !

King, to whose court all kings and princes throng,

Before whose throne the knee of kingship bends !

In Song's proud realms, where might with right
meets, blends,

One principality doth most belong

To thee—the Sonnet—stronghold of the strong,

Tower where true might moves e'er to mightier ends.

This the poetic armies of the brain

Assault, attack—thoughts wildly charge and
storm

Firm bastions and fixt battlements of Form,

To learn repulse until, 'mid fancies slain,

The heart and soul of passion and thought remain

Triumphant, with the beams of victory warm.

A GRAVE BY THE SEA

WHEN he was dead whom all had known to love,
Not one beside thee in that silent group
Stood lone as thou whom Death at one fell swoop
Had robbed of friend—of friendship's brooding
dove.

Yet came no comfort from the stars above,
While sorrow's leaden lids refused to droop,
Nor would thy large, thy lofty spirit stoop
To lift Sleep's gage—to lift Sleep's vaunting glove.

Though of thy friend—thy brother—thou wert
robbed,

Others were nigh to bless thy desolate fears,
And ev'n when most the voice of Pity sobbed
Love held a balm to soothe thy bitter tears—
Love who could tell how Gabriel's heart still throbbed
And pulsed with life-blood of the glorious years.

AN OPEN-AIR FRIENDSHIP

George Borrow and Theodore Watts

I SAW old Lavengro, who mused and pondered,
Stalking through meadows with his giant stride ;
The poet-friend was with him as he wandered,
With wisdom's bark at anchor by his side.
The old man's hair—each windy lock blown
trembling—
To silver mist about his head seemed turned,
When sunset's burnisht cavalcades assembling,
His eyes in lurid conflagration burned.
Then home! Though love may suffer life's eclipses,
What friendship lit with more revealing beams
Than theirs, who knew and loved the dusky gypsies,
Who loved and knew the woods and hurrying
streams!
What love so bright in face of Fate or Sorrow—
God's gift, and man's, to quell and conquer Borrow !

GEORGE BORROW ON ELVIR HILL

To W. T. W. and T. G. H.

*Boyhood lends Nature laughter ere it borrow
Her tears by usury of circumstance,
And yet some changeless magic as of chance
Throws midnight shadows over every morrow ;
For this fair child felt something like to sorrow
When only smiles are youth's inheritance :
The Elle-girls weaving the bright faery dance
Spake faery spells into the ear of Borrow.*

*And now to-day, with lucent tresses clinging,
Those elves and fairies of eternal fame
Weave spells of love and laughter round his name,
Their greenest treasure from green woodlands
bringing,
While those two friends, who clove so to him, claim
To set the chimes of his remembrance ringing.*

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

GREATEST since Shelley's tireless tide broke strong

Upon the strand of life in billowed rhyme,

Swinburne, whose glory gladdens Autumn's
prime

With praiseless music and with princely song,

Throned as a god above the kneeling throng,

Beholdest thou with godlike eyes sublime

Thy brine-breathed waves break o'er the wall of
time,

Floating the fame that doth to thee belong.

Far be the day when life must yield thee up,

Undying, to the deathless hands of Death

Whose winnowing wings divide the air above ;

Far be the day thou shalt have filled the cup

With wine of thine own soul, that loves the breath

Of foam-flowered fields rejoicing in thy love.

'SONGS BEFORE SUNRISE'

THESE are the lyric fields where Shelley trod,
Where glad dewes gleam like stars imparadised ;
Above, the blue lips of the air are spiced
With breath uprisen from dewy turf and sod.
Here Shelley sang, with feet for soaring shod,
But hands in Envy's mundane clutches viced :
His Heaven these fields wherein he walked as
Christ ;

Where may not we put crown on thee as God ?

Shelley is but a name, yet wind and wave
Speak never louder in their morning mirth
Than Shelley from the universe, his grave
Where Death writhes ever in the throes of birth ;—
And thy name shines with Shelley's, his who gave
Sunrise of singing as a creed for earth.

'AND THERE WAS LIGHT'

WHAT art thou ! What the leaves are to the woods
When communist April revolutionises
Their lonely pride and grandiose solitudes
With primal thrills and throbbing new surprises;
So thou to Song in all her myriad moods.

What art thou ! What the woods are to the gale
Bowling the trees like mellow violins,
When piny murmurs play a sombre scale
'Mid deep harmonics every elm begins ;
So thou to Song when shaping gusts prevail.

What art thou ! What the gale is to the earth—
The gale that races with the light and ranges
The hills and heights—the gale whose wrinkling
mirth
Moves morn to glowing jests and ruddy
changes ;
So thou to Song in plenitude or dearth.

What art thou ! What the earth is to the sun—

A line in the sestina of the stars,

Whose rhymes enlink and follow one by one—

A bar in Time's sonata built of bars ;

So thou in Song's great system web-like spun.

What art thou ! What the sun to space impearled

When Hallelujahs of the dawn are shouted

And graven standards of the light unfurled,

And raven soldieries of night are routed,

Art thou to Song—Light-giver of the world.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER

THOU wert a woman, and thy wide warm heart
Loved all things lovable : thy singing breath
Curled upward through the silver air of Art,
Until from earth thy spirit did depart
'Mid dark proposals of audacious Death.

Thou wert a poet, and thy proud pure soul
Divined the poet's mission well—to teach
The world new wisdom from the olden scroll,
To thrill the mind as by the heart's control,
And girdle with imaginative speech.

'Twas thine to win old Browning's grand regard ;
Fondly he loved his wife Elizabeth ;
And fresh from love of such as she, dawn-starred
His heart comes like the morning—sealed and
barred
Impenetrably 'gainst Despair and Death.

AUSTIN DOBSON

BLAND courtier of the Muses !

Diplomatist unscarred

Between the triple powers, whose ruses

Entrap and baulk the bard—

Rhyme and rhythm and form !

On silken coat-lapel and border

Thy knighthood manifest,

How many a star and order

Re-decorate thy breast—

Rhyme and rhythm and form.

Love-playful or in play satiric,

Thou movest among the throng,

Thyself a living lyric,

A pure incarnate song—

Rhyme and rhythm and form.

I see thee smiling often,

But, when thou art alone,

Thy smiles will swoon to tears which soften

All sorrow with their own,

The man's heart piercing warm

Rhyme and rhythm and form.

ADAH ISAACS MENKEN

HALF slave she was, and yet half queen ;
More queen in hand and heart than slave
In aught else that she may have been
Through acts her proud heart's prayers could
save.

But, queen or slave, her spirit gave
One mien alike to slave or queen,
To life, and what of grimy death was human—
The fame, the shame, the name of woman.

Day, was it day or starless night
Filled the nude gulfs where her eyes lay
Like twinned worlds wading in that light
Which laps the spirit's brows for aye ?
Ah ! night or day, her spirit's sway
Was light alike to day or night,

To earth, or aught the lovely dew illumine—
Flame of the fame and shame of woman.

Like joys for Hell, from her heart's Heaven
Her honey of song oozed up and fell ;
As, when the months have counted seven,
The roses give the air their smell.
Of Heaven or Hell, her spirit's spell
Could leaven alike both Hell and Heaven
With colour and sound (god Raphael felt with
Schumann)—
The fame, the shame, the name of woman.

SIDNEY LANIER

ROUND the earth the moon of matchless Song e'er
circles brimmed and bright,
Bright and brimful with the secret whose solution
is but Light,
And the earth, with eyes bedazzled by the
sunlight launched effulgent
From the sun of Fate upon the seas of seeing
and of sight,
Glories in the moon of Song unmatched in either
day or night.—

Glories, for her eyes, recovered of the daylight's
dazzlement,
Gaze above and understand the moonlight whence
a balm is sent

Weaving Sorrow's wounds with joy whereof is
Sorrow's self indulgent—

Understand the message, song, and grasp the
songful meaning meant :

Light that dubs the darkness Day, and caps the
world with sweet content.

“”

Thou—the only morning-star the barren morning
bears and yields

Heaven in worldless heights alone the New
World's towering future shields—

Sing'st and, singing, bring'st the moon a
service more than Fate melodious

(Fate the sun who lends to Song whatever sceptred
light she wields)—

Bring'st and, bringing, sing'st, the starriest flower
of all the starless fields.

Thou, her only star-dove, plainest whiter than the
pleading snow,

Pleadedst on thy heights Columbian where the
reptile shadows go

In and out amid the morning with insinua-
tions odious—

Bleedest in thy whiteness as her other star-bird,
Edgar Poe,

Like a pitchy raven watched the blood upon his
plumage glow.

ENVOY

STARRY splendour singing ever though the mouth
that sang is mute,
Soul, a flower on earth too fragrant that in Heaven
hast taken root,
Springing up among the hidden spheres which
God bedews with singing,
Verse like thine can take me, touch me, string me,
strike me like a lute,
Lift me to the lips of rapture, sound and play me
like a flute.

JOHN PAYNE

IMMORTAL, crowned with lily-wreaths of light,
Whose voice of old so softly, sweetly sang,
May I not bring the reverence which upsprang
As dawn upsprings from out the house of night ?
Thy House of Dreams rose lovely in my sight ;
Far from the iron strife of bells that clang
Thy silver chimes of starry speech outrang,
Hanging upon mine ear like jewels bright.

Immortal, crowned with lily-wreaths of flame,
Thou who hast ever soft and sweetly spoken,
Like those sea-fostered mariners who came
To the isle that hath pale lotus leaves for token,
Forgetting friends or hope of home or fame,
Here could I sit through all mischance hath
wroken,
Striving to catch some magic of thy name,
Until the spell upon thy lips be broken.

ON HIS 'VILLON'

IN spirit and in sense with song to wit

In this rare book is all that Villon writ ;

John Payne the author, and he seems to fence

The name of Villon round with lustre whence

The lanterns of the stars themselves are lit.

John Payne the author, and such excellence

Herein is found, such odour breathing hence,

Aloft with Villon's self he seems to sit

In spirit and in sense !

John Payne the author, and in husht suspense

We look to Heaven where clinging clouds are
dense,

But a voice clangs loud from out the Devil's pit

Where the last links of dreadful night are knit :

'Villon he sought in Hell, and knew him thence

In spirit and in sense.'

A MASQUE

THOU perfume, the brown-hearted hedges
Are odorous of thee ;
June brings thee with her when she edges
The year with silver, and the bee
Puts gold upon his wings for thee.

Thou colour, every cloud's clear margent
Encoloured glows with thee ;
Eve brings thee with her, grandly argent,
When space grows pious, and the sea
Puts purple on his eyes for thee.

All perfumes, colours, strangely blending,
Are wonderful through thee ;
The hues, the scents of life's great ending
Are fragrant—fair—Eternity
Puts kisses on Death's mouth for thee.

JOAQUIN MILLER

LONE poet, where the skirts of sunset roll,
There roll the dreams of folded sleep, which
seem
To mix and mingle with thy mighty soul,
There where the lidded mountains lie asleep,
And husht clouds keep and solemnise their dream
As at some festival of fear and dole.

On the sierras of thy soul they melt—
The glittering snows of Poesy, to flow
In running rivers round the world, a belt
Girdling the massive hips of Time with grace,
Old Time whose face is thin and like the snow,
Haggard with fear, and filled with dole unfelt.

ANDREW LANG

SMOOTH mouthpiece for the clarionet

Whence Bion and Theocritus

Blew music blandly garrulous,

Thy murmuring music haunts me yet.

Instead of thyme and cytissus—

Twin darlings of thy Sicily—

The heather and the hills I see,

And the dark broom auriferous.

For, while I hear, I picture thee,

Priest of the sacred Rod and Creel,

Watching the dazed whipped ripples reel

Upon the loch Eternity.

I see thee, as the shadows wheel,
Bring Homer like a fish to land—
A thing of leaping silver, grand,
And brightly bendable as steel.

Or gypsy-like I view thee stand,
My boyhood's Bedouin strangely set
'Mong books which ask, 'Canst thou forget
His tent 'mid life's Sahara-sand ?'

ROBERT BRIDGES

WHITE swan upon our Thames of Poesy,
Thy shadow etched upon the waters there
Seems bearing and significant to me,
For o'er its darkling outlines do I see
Thyself carved crystal in the amber air.

The gracious contours of the virgin bird,
The virgin colour of its gracious plumes,
Chisel the air with beauty, clear, unblurred,
Beyond the effort of the beauteous word
To touch with light of language that illumines.

I only know thou art there : the senses feel
Thy grace, which clarifies the air with light,

Seen as the morn, make quiet pulses reel,

Heard as a holy sound, unseal, reveal,

Dim purities of spirit from the night.

As down thou floatest I have striven to borrow

Meet speech from mysteries encompassing—

To weave my web of words about to-morrow—

I, reconciled to joy in face of sorrow,

Hymn thee, who joy in every human thing.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY

THY world was a whirlwind of music, whose
measure

Was set to the dance of the wind on the trees ;
The leaves of thy lips were so stirred that their
treasure—

The song-seed of kisses—was given to the breeze,
Was lost by the breeze in its passion of pleasure,
And scattered as breath of the land by the sea's.

The town where thou dwelledst was song, and thy
dwelling

Was built in the terrace God flagged with the stars,
But 'way to the woods, where the willows stood
telling

Of May to the lilies afloat in their cars,
How often thou rann'st when, as midnight was
knelling,

The town turned as human, grew ghastly with
scars,

Thy dream was a cameo of colour ; when sleeping,
When waking, thy dream was beside thee, was
near.

Thy seeing grew keen of its sight till the weeping,
Tears-blood, of thy heart blurred the eyes that
saw clear ;

But the Heaven which thou hast—that hath thee
in its keeping—

Transfigures the smile and effaces the tear.

、

PAUL VERLAINE

THE Muses loved thee in thy joys and pains,
Thy smiles and tears, and, when joy's light
grew less,
Forthysake loved thy cares, which seemed to bless
Life with the clank of their melodious chains.
The Muses loved thee, and their love remains
In many a page's pious loveliness,
And, ringing through the trumpet of 'Sagesse,'
Time's voice links Villon's victory with Verlaine's.

When thou art dead, methinks thy grave should be
Some hill where God's pure passion of peace is rife,
In sound and hearing of the haggard sea,
That in its noble elemental strife
Man might behold a test and type of thee,
Thou billowy harp for every wind of life.

MES HÔPITAUX

OFT thou, in hospital lying still,
Hast watched the watchful flowerets grow
Like poems on the window-sill,
And seen the solemn sunlight flow
O'er heaven as water o'er a mill.

So we, in these gray wards of strife,
Watch, watch thy gracious poems grow
Like flowerets with dim secrets rife,
And weep to see thy soul's light flow
As sunlight over sordid life.

ARTHUR RIMBAUD

THE glare and gleam from many a yellow lamp
Fall on the face of one who, in the street,
Seems to have gilded sandals for his feet,
Whose brow seems glad for glory's brand and stamp.
He holds a wand of starlight, bright and damp
With pearled fantastic dew ; his eyes are sweet
With legend ; and his spirit-pinions beat
Against the bars that cage them round and cramp.

Rimbaud, your youth was but a flame unfanned,
Those days you lived had petals still unblown ;
The wand you shattered, it was not your own—
'Twas all the world's : Heaven saw it in your hand,
When lo, it fell, and on life's desert sand
One pearl was left resplendent and alone !

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

UNCONQUERABLE soul !

Your march is music to the human mind

As, glowing, variously incarnadined

With streaming wounds and gashes

Whence Fate's malignance flashes,

You go to conquer the unconquered goal,

Your spirit's victory lighting up life's ashes.

Indomitable soul !

Your large symphonious star-concerted art,

Your instrumental harmonies of heart,

Your spirit's orchestration,

Are all a revelation

How from the sounding-board of Fate re-roll

Your doming thunders of unmoved laudation.

EDMUND GOSSE

SCHOLAR, who seest in every olden tome
That wears the dusty book-plate of the years
A magic as of morning, when the dome
Is bright with sheen of shaggy orient spears !
Like one who lifts a curtain of some rare stuff
I peer within, and see the age antique,
When hearts were rare though man's own speech
was rough
As billows bounding in 'the silver streak.'
Those wondrous days that tinge the seas of time
With dolphin splendours of Elizabeth,
When the refrain of every running rhyme
Rang clear to iron challenges of Death !
Dark night beneath and glory overhanging,
See, how they shine with gleaming armour
clanging !

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

WITH cheeks that take the morning's radiant hues,
With ears that stoop and eyes that swim and
glisten,

For what thin-spoken word dost thou now listen?—
What cooing murmur of the blithesome Muse?
Art thou some angel whom the stars accuse
With awful lips thou hast so often kissen?
Art man? or but a babe for dreams to christen
With coloured light and beaming rainbow dew?

Thy gaze sought out the sun the planets serve
With liege devotion of the godlike knee;
Thy task was Light: when duty thought to swerve,
The eyes that gazed had lost the strength to see:
We are blind as thou, but thy soul's eyes observe
The shadowy pageants of Eternity.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON

ON HIS BIRTHDAY

THE shadow of God fell o'er thy face, and rolled
Night on the dim horizon of thy birth ;
Our night is now thy dawn, with lasting dearth
Of pain, thy sponsor in iron days of old. ,
Love, who so loved thee, let thy heart behold
Life's seemingsorrow and Death's unseemly mirth ;
And what was thine ? far whispers from mid-
earth—

The golden miracle of things untold.

A pilgrim from the glittering courts of Love,
I kneel and kiss the slipper of thy fame,
Make dedicate this day to thy sweet name
Bright with the light from skies that bend above,
Where now thou singest, as a silver dove
Heard 'mid the years' harmonious acclaim.

WHAT OF DEATH?

YOU might not look upon the sun,

Yet, ah, the sun was kind !

And, though you could not see, being blind,

You felt his warm endearments run

Through you. Thank the sun !

You might not look upon the sea,

Yet, ah, the sea was kind !

And (though you only heard, being blind)

Its waters, tipped-eternally,

Knew you. Bless the sea !

You might not look on Life, whose breath

Was blizzard-like, unkind ;

And, as you could not see, being blind,

That God might give your sight back Death

Slew you. What of Death ?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

I

THERE by the clear Samoan sands
Where stooping billows kiss, take hands,
Then die,
Thine is the form I find in dreams
Where o'er thee, as a mother, stands
The sky.

Thy paradise of taper palms,
Fingering the ivory air, thy balms,
Thy birds,
Thy holy dusk of dim slim dreams—
They come to me, and, like old psalms,
Thy words.

They have in them the old gold ring,
And fields green-tartaned with the spring
Flash by,
Colour the doming glass of dreams,
And from the Forth grey mists unking
The sky.

From the pure Pentlands hear the call !
'Come back, come back, the mists enthrall
The sea ;
The heather's eyes are thick with dreams ;
Come back ! thy country offers all
To thee.'

2nd August 1894.

II

ON Vaea's mountain-top he lies—
Sleeps soundly, say, but never dies ;

Ah, no !

From his pure height he sees not Death,
Who prowls with ever-watchful eyes
Below.

On Vaea's mountain-top he sleeps,
And all the passionate forest-deeps
Are stirred

As if the ringing axe of Death
Had startled Nature's self, who weeps
Unheard.

The panther sea with foam-white paws,

The moon—a flashing curve of gauze,

A leaf

Dropped from the glimmering brows of Death—

Each seems to have a piteous cause

For grief.

He sleeps the dreamful sleep of rest,

Our Parsifal of Prose, whose quest

And strife

Are calmed and quelled at last by Death,

The keeper of the Grail possessed

Of life.

24th December 1894.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HEREDIA

IF thou indeed be not a phantom shape,
And thine harmonious verse be not a dream—
If the full thought thou dost so richly drape
With wordy jewels catching fancy's gleam
Have no false part in Love's misleading scheme,
And thou art all my senses make believe—
God still can work in gold, and earth would seem
Still to have golden chances to achieve.
For when I hear thy 'bosomed sonnets' heave,
Washing the air with music, then my heart—
That ruddy tapestry for love to inweave
With purple threads of pleasure at thine art—
Trembles, and Heaven a planet's space comes
nearer,
And light seems lovelier still, and night seems
clearer.

AVEC LES TROPHÉES

My king, and captain of that corps

Who march beneath the Sonnet's banner—

Most regal of all who ever wore

The coronet, Form, in kingly manner—

See, I would merely touch your stirrup

As, 'mid the dust of days, you pass :

May not the humblest field-bird chirrup

When nightingales mouth summer's mass !

You fade. I hear your horse's hooves

Hallooing to the echoes round,

And with you half a glory moves,

While I stand here austere crowned,

Richer than kings or turbaned sophys,

Rich with the coin of God, thy Trophies.

OLIVER MADOX-BROWN

ROSE PARABLES : NO. 2

DEATH (like that Nimrod who of old decreed
A prophet's youth should glut the hungering fire)
Spake thus to Life, whose smiles enkindled ire—
Ire that his doom alone could fill or feed :
' Die thou, and sate the flames, that in their greed
Fight with the wind who curbs the fiend, desire :'
And Life the child was flung where flames were
dire,
And mists of smoke, upwreathing, seemed to plead.
But He, whose name the stars keep ever bright,
Turned the fell flames to a bed of laughing roses
Whence every petal each pure blossom throws is
Rubied with tincture of celestial light,
And, while Life's eyes a silver sleep encloses,
We know not whether it be day or night.

FRENZY-FLOWER

OH, Oliver! Oh, Oliver!

The mists are heavy on the hills of time ;
But, through the years as, whorled and white, they
climb,
I view your visage darkly silhouetted,
And over all looms Death, whose lean hand
whetted
The encrimsoned knife that winced and blushed
with crime.

Yea, Oliver! My Oliver!

For it was crime to kill you whose young breath
Spake youth for watchword, youth for shibboleth,
Till Fate intrigued your soul's assassination,
Searing the blade with blood for her oblation
In some momentous anarchy of Death.

Oh, Oliver ! Oh, Oliver !

Life darkens waywardly towards the gloom

Where, gibbeted on gallows-trees of doom,

Like human things dance Death's maleficent
actions

And criminal deeds to fit with Fate's exactions,

And there his crime in killing you hath room.

Yea, Oliver ! My Oliver !

You did not die : Death slew you ere half your
prime ;

No pardon could encompass such a crime

Save your great heart which from its fleshly
fastness

Beat with the spirit, and took in its vastness

Such grand circumference of the hills of time.

OSCAR WILDE

TO-DAY our city is in some wise fair,
As morning's roseate pulses throb and beat,
For all her ways are hallowed of thy feet,
Breathing thy presence like an incense rare.
With Art for guide thou hast clomb the jewelled
stair,
Yea, stood with Dante in the sacred street,
And sweet it is to think, if thought be sweet,
Thou hast a lily for Edina's hair—

A lily from the charmed fields of speech,
Messiah of the Beautiful, who bidst
Beauty give ear to what thou hast to teach,
While we, with joy's bright missal new unfolden,
Hail thee whose soul, enkindling in our midst,
Breaks into light and burns divinely golden.

WILLIAM SHARP

WHAT odours hang about thee,

Warm from the rose of great Rossetti's prime ;

The crier hours do shout thee,

Describe thee down the hollow halls of time.

What noises move around thee,

Deep from the mellow wood of Death's bassoon,

Since Gabriel died who bound thee

With ropes of love which God undid so soon.

What colours burn above thee,

Bright from the brush which turned thy friend-
ship gold ;

'Twere effort not to love thee

Who loved that living splendour triple-souled.

What can God see beneath thee !

Under thy feet God knows my heart lies gory,
And mists of Fate may sheathe thee,
But thou, knowing Gabriel, art assured of glory.

JOHN DAVIDSON

WITH 'FLEET STREET ECLOGUES'

THE Muses love thee, and their loves evince
Such light and jewelled fire of passionate joy
Spring grows more bold: no longer, cool and coy,
Meeting the sun with eyes that droop and wince.
Yea, Spring is princess now, and Love the prince
Hath given her many a rainy bow for toy,
And gave, when Chaucer met them as a boy ;
Ah, Spring hath been one starry anthem since !

And now, John Davidson (whose sylvan ruses
Have waked the spring from dreams of sun and
flowers,
From sleepy visions of the folded hours),
She waits thy gift—waits, while her gaze infuses
New life in the eyes of thy great loves, the Muses,
Who ring thee round in honey-hearted bowers.

WITH THE 'PLAYS'

TROTting by Shakespeare's side, thou seem'st to
catch

A splendour from his presence known and felt
In all thine actions : Pity's tears may melt ;
But thou hast joys and shining smiles to match :
Defeat with mailed and desperate hands may snatch
The dagger, shame, from Victory's glittering belt ;
But thou hast balm for every buffet dealt,
Hast unguents rare for every wound and scratch.

Reiterate running rumours are abroad
Of Summer's coronation : tree and bird
Take voice together ; wind and stream applaud ;
And thou (for God did dub thee bard, and gird
With glaive of gleaming speech), hast thou no laud,
To whom the seasons and the sun give word ?

WITH THE 'BALLADS AND SONGS'

UNBOWED he sings, and lifts elate

 The pennon of his thoughts and dreams ;
And Life and Death and Chance and Fate
 He chooses as his glowing themes.

Into the lists of splendid song

 He rides with Death to run at tilt,
Where plummy Right unhorses Wrong,
 And Purity engages Guilt.

From out the lists he comes to ride,

 With victory's beady dew's impearled,
Accepting, as he kneels in pride,
 The crown of Beauty from the world.

HADLEY WOOD

ENGLAND, he loves thee, and his love
 Appeareth like the spring
With beauty for a sky above
 And health a bird to sing.

When Summer holds her bergomask,
 He fares along as Spring ;
Nor spring nor summer shall I ask
 If he will only sing !

LIONEL JOHNSON

THY words win love as roses
 Win the spring,
For all my heart uncloses,
Clings to sing and sings to cling,
Around thee, of thee, like the spring.

Thy 'Paestan roses' blooming
 May not fade ;
My heart, a wood, grows glooming,
Made to shade with shade dim-made
And cool for blooms too fair to fade.

Thy blooms are of such colour

 All the light

Lifts lighter, while the night dies duller,

White at sight of sight so white—

Blancht beauty of thy spirit's light.

WILLIAM WATSON

WHAT charms are these thou buildest over life?

What sober beauties house its heavy care?

What grandiose periods of what peace make
fair

The days of its retributory strife

With white perfection of religious air?

Thine edificial fancies are its charms.

A heavenly roof its earthly sorrows find

Beneath thy kingly spaciousness of mind.

Thy large embrace of intellectual arms

Brings comfort to its hurried days behind.

From what high mansions of the Muse art thou,

On embassies of awful import sent,

Come to the ample courts of earth, content,
Though algebraic mysteries move us now,
To know that God is sure of what is meant.

In lines of thine which come and come again
I catch a glory of the pagan sea,
And ofttimes hear miraculously through thee
The storm's contralto murmurs unto men,
The thunder droning like a golden bee.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

THOU bowl for God to fill with sacred wine,
And sweeten with the cedar-spice of song,
Thee happy angels in a starry throng
Twine brightly o'er with rose and eglantine ;
I lift thee brimming to these lips of mine
(Lips wet with waters of the earth how long !);
I drink, and hand and soul become twice strong
To thank the vintner God—to thank the Vine.

Thou crucifix, that Heaven hath chose to carve
From out the ivory fragments of His heart
Who gave His blood to all the veins of earth,
Worshipping thee, the soul, once wont to starve
For Faith's fair sustenance, sees the world's
eyes start
Like almond blossoms into lovelier birth,

Filled with such grave sweet mirth,
Such part-sad laughter of divine compassion,
That Hope, with lips tight-locked and strange
and ashen,
Finds strength whereby to fashion
A temple rare as ever angel trod,
Husht as the vast white beating heart of God.

CREATION

THOU shouldst with Crashaw have adored and knelt
In some dim sanctuary of olden time.
What raptures would each heart in turn have felt!
How soul replied to soul as rhyme to rhyme!

Perchance God made thee when He Crashaw made,
Then let thee sleep, till here thou wokest to find
The fugue at fault which earth's hidd'n organ played,
Clashing with golden preludes from thy mind.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON

EXQUISITE and airy,
How thy verses ramble
Through their lyric broom and bramble !
How their footsteps vary,
Thou entrancing fairy
Threading the wild woods of words like a huntress
wary !

When the springtime twitches
Eager thumb and finger,
Twines them round the flakes that linger
In forgotten niches,
Witch, thy wand bewitches
Those miraculous woods of ours, mistress of their
riches.

A CAT-REVERIE

'SPHINX of my quiet hearth,' my cat

Sits at my feet and purrs.

I marvel what it marvels at

As, blinking at the fire,

It questions Fate what force is hers,

What longing, what desire.

I think of you ; the fire burns bright ;

From glowing frames of coal

Your face gleams lovely on my sight.

I stoop and stroke my cat,

As Love might stoop and stroke your soul

If at God's feet you sat.

NORMAN GALE

THE country and the country fields,
The wild rose in the forest,
The creamy bloom the wild rose yields,
The thicket's cuckoo chorist,
All fair things that sing and shine,
For a moment they are mine ;
Thou hast made them : they are thine.

God made the fields and birds and flowers,
But poets can re-make them,
When Death looms darkly in the bowers,
And sound and light forsake them ;
Let the world in shadow pine,
Song and splendour still are mine ;
Thou hast made them : they are thine.

Thou hast re-made Spring's universe,
For glad brooks change and chuckle ;
Thou gavest the winds the leaf to nurse,
The dews the rose to suckle :
Poet, dainty and divine,
All thy rural joys are mine ;
Thou hast made them : they are thine.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

A STAR shone at thy birth, I trow,
Whose amethystine sphere
Coloured the air above, below,
With loving lustres clear ;
Shone, and the young white soul of thee
Grew bright with all the future was to be.

Still, still, it shines as at thy birth,
And from its skyey seat
It mellows every mood of earth
With colour grave and sweet ;
But never was its royal ray
So rich in splendour as it is to-day.

21st November 1893.

HESPER

THE shadows droop ; her dusky tresses

Night lets fall o'er earth's dim eyes ;

With fingers starry-ringed she presses

Hands she loved ere daylight dies.

Now sits she all alone, and hears

Time playing low and strange and faint

His quaint old harpsichord of years.

The shadows stoop ; the world is sleeping :

Fate between us twain hath crept—

Crept past the stealthy shadows creeping,

While the darkness dozed and slept.

Darkness ? Behold the stars, and see

Where heavenly Hesper drapes the breast

Of western heaven with light—for thee.

RELIGIO AMANTIS

*BEAUTY my one religion is,
By which I hold, by which I swear,
And God may truly call it His,
For 'tis significantly fair.*

*The lucence of my lady's eye
To me is more than any creed;
Her joys, her smiles and wiles, supply
My only spiritual need.*

*The blue confessional of air,
By all the holy seasons trod
Inclineth to my lightest prayer
The very auricle of God.*

*To me the lily, any star,
Are but His crozier, but His sword ;
The solemn thunder from afar
Reads out the lesson of my Lord.*

*Beauty my one religion is,
On earth I find it, and in love ;
The earth and love and all are His—
But what of Him ? Is He above ?*

ARTHUR SYMONS

BORN for the poet's purple, thou
Art nominated by the Muses now,
Art pointed out the Apollonian throne,
And half-reluctant made to own
The bays which bind thy brow.

Life built of tears and smiles—
Based upon smiles but topped with tears—
The hive of heaven and all the humming spheres—
Are thine—the unearthly-architected piles,
The Olympian measurements of miles.

Strange women at thy feet are fain,
Green-eyed imperishably like the main,
Tressed with the sun-gold's (see, ah, see !)
Imperial indestructibility,
Moving in joy or pain.

They are thy girls of Passion,
Thy passion-women lipped for kissing :
With feet that halt in Hell and voices hissing,
They lead Love's dances, joyless, ashen—
White festering things the hands of genius fashion.

JOHN GRAY

JOHN GRAY, thy name brings sweetly back to me
The savour of the seaweed and the sea,
For in some wise my heart goes out to thee
As doth the sea-bird to the sallow sea.

And, when 'tis traced in silver on thy page
(Thy heart's dim yearning to a twilit age),
My heart too seems to beat my body's cage,
Yearning for twilight of a twilit age.

CADENCES

FATE, moving by mad semitones
Right up the scale of life,
Struck thee, thou treble note,
And from thine ebon throat
Came music high and clear and rife
With mirth which melted into moans.

But moans or mirth, despair or joy,
Thou ringest in mine ears,
For Fate, whose fingers hit
Thy soul, staccatoing it,
Left vibrant all the mellow spheres
Which string the harp called heaven, rare boy.

Thou ringest in mine ears, I say,
A marvellous monotone ;
To the deep air around
Thou givest a heart of sound ;
When God and I are left alone,
I wonder wilt thou die away.

OF THE MUSES

ENVOY

THE WHITE BOOK

THE RELIGION OF A BOOKLOVER

*ALL hail, my books ! I greet ye, friends and fellows,
Greet ye as never pilgrim, ages back,
Greeted that Lady in whose shining track
Heaven walketh with the light that moves and mellows.
All hail, my books ! My blues, and greens, and yellows,
That weave the rainbow of my joy, I lack
No patch of sunshine when the sky grows black,
And thunder like a trampled lion bellows.*

*For ye, my books, who are Father and Son to me
(Rich arteries of the earth's eternal heart),
Have smiles to parry Sorrow's darkest dart—
Sorrow, who grinds her curst white teeth to see
How from the centre of the world ye start,
And wind yourselves about Eternity.*

3rd December 1893.

OF THE MUSES

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